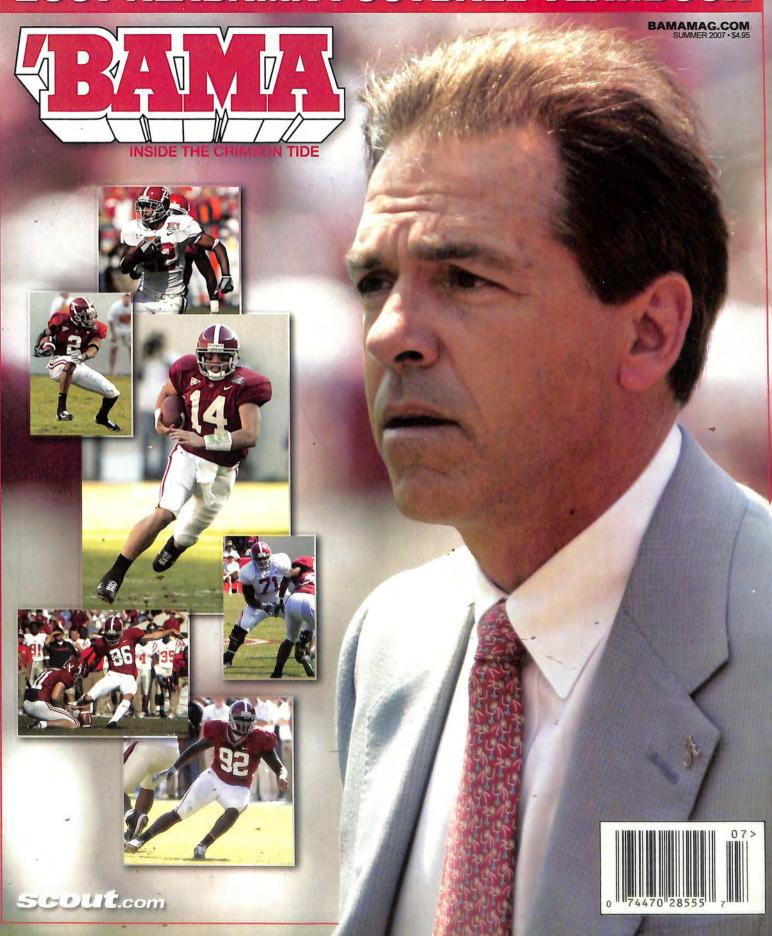
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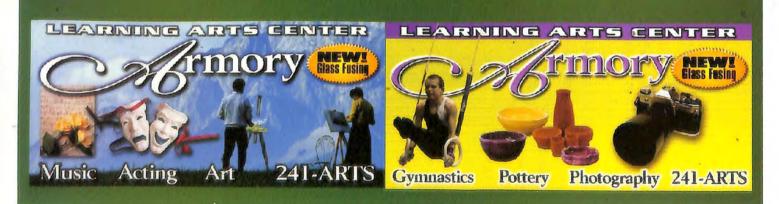




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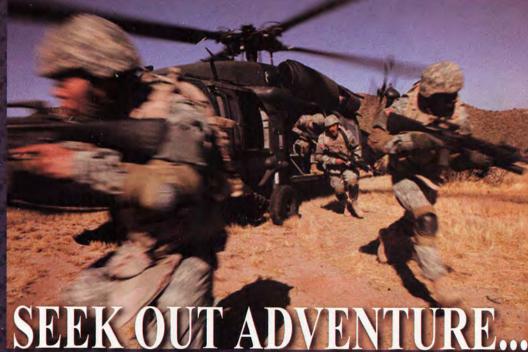
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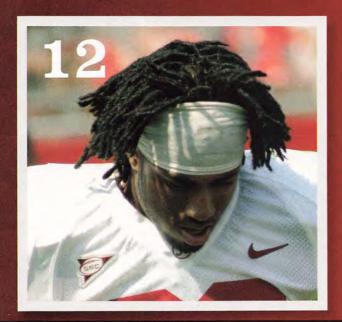
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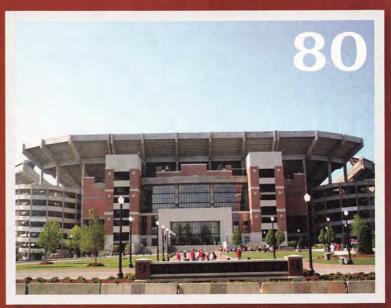
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'BAMA INSIDE THE CRIMSON TIDE

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

DEAR FELLOW CRIMSON TIDE FANS,

So is this how it was in the day? The question came from a young man, and wasn't meant to remind me that I am from "the day." Young and old should be aware that once again the world of college football seems to be revolving around Tuscaloosa. Not so much the Alabama Crimson Tide football team, which is coming off an inglorious 6-7 season, but the Alabama Crimson Tide football coach, Nick Saban. The young man was looking at a publication which covers University of Florida athletics.

A Florida publication almost couldn't have enough pages for discussion of Gators these days, back-to-back national championships in basketball sandwiching a football national championship. But there it was: a page devoted to musings about the new Alabama football coach.

I guess I am from the day. I covered Alabama football—which is to say I covered Coach Paul Bryant—as a young sportswriter in the late 1960s. I then worked for the Alabama athletics department—which is to say Coach Bryant—through most of the 1970s. Then I returned to Bryant-Alabama coverage after founding 'BAMA Magazine in 1979.

And much as Alabama football today is Nick Saban, Bama football in that magnificent quarter century from the arrival of Bryant in 1958 through his last season of 1982 centered on the head football coach.

In the day, there could be no college football story taken seriously if it didn't include some reference to Bryant. A national television reporter once asked me if I thought Coach Bryant really had much clout. I enjoyed my answer, even knowing it was not exactly true. "Ben Franklin started "The Saturday Evening Post' and Coach Bryant closed it down," I said. Of course, factors other than the successful suit by Bryant and former Georgia Coach Wally Butts after the non-sensical Post story the two had conspired to fix a football game contributed to the end of that magazine's demise as a national weekly.

'BAMA Magazine is always interested in the thoughts and actions of the Alabama head football coach. We intend to have Nick Saban's opinions on matters of Alabama football and college football as much as possible. And more than at any time since "the day" I expect to have to compete for the time and thoughts of the Tide's head football coach.

And that's the way we like it. Interest from others in Alabama football and in Nick Saban can be translated to be concern by others about Alabama football and about Nick Saban. We still have concerns, too, but evidence is that Crimson Tide football is headed in the right direction.

Sincerely,

Kirk McNair

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FOOTBALL BY KIRK McNAIR

AN OVERVIEW

Every Team Can Use A Little Luck

ome things never change. Every year in this space there is a reminder that good football teams have to have good players and good coaches. And the very best also have good luck. It is important to have good schedule luck and good injury luck.

It is often true that a team will be about as good this season as it was the previous season, although some teams go up and down. Alabama in recent years has been particularly notorious for following a good season with a bad season. Actually, Bama had been on something of a three-year cycle for the past decade or so. A mediocre season followed by a good season followed by a poor season. It was 8-3 in 1995, 10-3 in 1996, 4-7 in 1997; then 7-5 in 1998, 10-3 in 1999, 3-8 in 2000; then 7-5 in 2001, 10-3 in 2002, 4-9 in 2003; then 6-6 in 2004, 10-2 in 2005, and 6-7 last season. So it could be argued that Alabama did a little better in the third year of this most recent cycle with six wins as opposed to three or four.

Mike Shula and his departed staff probably realize it was not good enough.

A change in coaching staff is not always good for the record. In modern times, it would be difficult to imagine taking over at a more difficult time than did Shula when he was named Bama's head football coach in May, 2003. And the results his first year were probably not unexpected, a 4-9 season. He inherited a team whose players had been coached the year before by Coach Runaway and in the spring by Coach Run Amok. The Tide was in the depths of an NCAA probation. It would have been a daunting task for the most experienced of coaches and was in the hands of a completely inexperienced head coach.

Before that, it is likely the most difficult job ever facing an Alabama coach was in 1958, when Paul Bryant took over a program bankrupt in almost every way except tradition. And Bryant was no rookie. He had a plan—a harsh plan that would leave scars—and

he made it work. The Bryant miracle of 1958 was a 5-4-1 record that seems modest today, certainly considering the fabulous Bryant record. But it followed a three-year period in which there had been a total of four victories.

Difficult times call for difficult measures. New scars are forming as Alabama's football program again begins a healing process.

Nick Saban is also experienced at winning and at doing things his way. His methods are proven.

Alabama is still a long way from having the stockpile of players necessary to make a splash in the national football pond. That doesn't mean that Saban and his staff can't take what they have and produce a number of victories, but any team is better off with good recruiting years stacked on top of good recruiting years. No one doubts Saban will get that done, but it couldn't get finished in one signing class.

The very best Alabama teams have been excellent defensive teams. This year the expectation would be that the offense will have to carry the defense. Of particular importance is having a talented, experienced quarterback, and Alabama has that in John Parker Wilson.

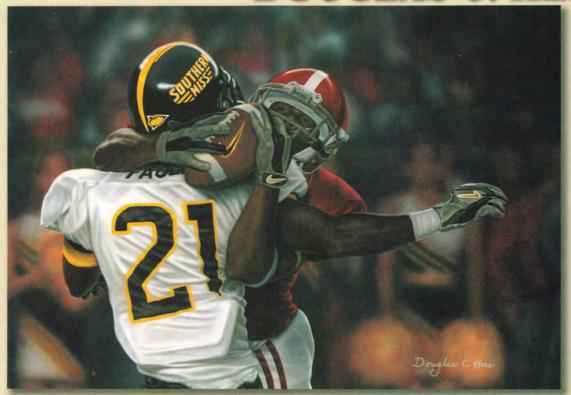
There is a change in Southeastern Conference schedules this year. All teams must play a game the week prior to the SEC Championship Game, which is December 1 in Atlanta this year. That means all league teams are playing on November 24. Since all conference teams are also beginning the season on September 1, it means that every team has one open date during the season.

The conference office assigns conference games, then each team fills in the five blanks with four non-conference games. Three teams play non-conference teams as traditional season-ending rivals—Florida playing Florida State, South Carolina meeting Clemson, and Georgia taking on Georgia Tech. Tennessee traditionally has been the final game of the year for two teams—Vanderbilt and Kentucky. But in order to meet the new criterion of playing the final weekend, Vandy has had to put Wake Forest at the end of the schedule.

Other teams play traditional conference rivals to end the season–Tennessee vs. Kentucky, Ole Miss vs. Mississippi State, LSU

2007 ALABAMA FOOTBALL SCHEDULE Date Opponent Site Series Record Tuscaloosa UofA leads 1-0-0 September 1 Western Carolina UofA leads 57-19-4 September 8 Vanderbilt Nashville Tuscaloosa UofA leads 10-7-0 September 15 Arkansas UofA leads 35-24-4 September 22 Tuscaloosa Georgia September 29 Florida State Jacksonville UofA leads 2-0-1 October 6 Houston Tuscaloosa (Homecoming) UofA leads 9-0-0 October 13 Mississippi Oxford UofA leads 43-9-2 October 20 Tuscaloosa UofA leads 44-38-7 Tennessee October 27 Open UofA leads 43-22-5 November 3 LSU Tuscaloosa Uof A leads 72-16-3 November 10 Mississippi State Starkville November 17 Louisiana-Monroe Tuscaloosa UofA leads 1-0-0 November 24 Auburn UofA leads 38-32-1 Auburn December 1 SEC Championship Atlanta 2 wins, 3 losses

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vs. Arkansas, and Alabama vs. Auburn.

Over the years Alabama has not had much schedule luck from the SEC, and that's the case again this year. Every SEC Western Division team was given an open date before playing Alabama. Ole Miss was the only one of those teams to fill the date with a game, hosting Louisiana Tech. Arkansas, LSU, Mississippi State, and Auburn will have two weeks to prepare for the Crimson Tide.

SEC East teams have games before playing Bama. Vandy is hosting Richmond before Alabama visits Nashville. That's a major improvement for Vanderbilt Coach Bobby Johnson, who last year had his first two games at Michigan and at Alabama. Georgia will play Bama's season-opening opponent, Western Carolina, before going to Tuscaloosa. And Tennessee–long the recipient of exceptional schedule "luck" in the SEC–will be at Starkville the week before going to Alabama.

Alabama has its open date on October 27, the week before hosting Nick Saban's former team, LSU.

Bama did get a big break in schedule luck this season. First of all, most of the SEC games considered to be most difficult are in Tuscaloosa–Arkansas on September 15, Georgia on September 22, Tennessee on October 20, and LSU on November 3.

Alabama no longer has the difficult task of ending the season with games against SEC strength teams LSU and Auburn.

This year, the Crimson Tide does not have consecutive road games.

The only bit of bad luck insofar as schedule is in non-conference games. Alabama is playing a non-conference game against a good program at a neutral site when the Crimson Tide goes to Jacksonville, Florida, on September 29 to play Florida State. If Alabama Athletics Director Mal Moore and FSU Athletics Director Dave Hart (a former Bama basketball player) hadn't been able to work out a good deal, that game would never have happened.

Western Carolina on September 1 and Louisiana-Monroe on November 17 are more along the lines of the non-league games Alabama has been playing in the past few years.

But the other out-of-conference game on the Bama schedule is deceptively difficult. October 6 opponent Houston has made great strides in its program.

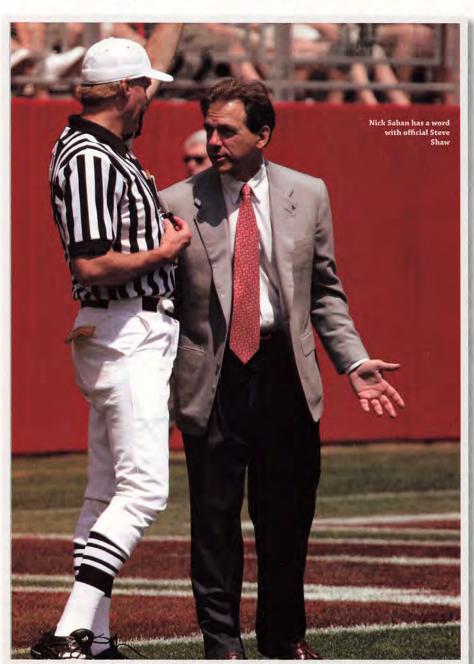
The luck issue that won't be known until later is which teams on the schedule will be better than expected and which will not be as strong as expected. Lucky or unlucky?

Injury luck is easy to understand. If your quarterback is injured, that is very bad luck. If you don't have very many defensive tackles and lose one, that is bad luck. It's bad luck to have any player injured, but all positions are not usually equal insofar as quantity and/or quality. Injury at a depth-poor position is more unlucky.

Losing a star player at any position can be disastrous. Consider the difference last season might have been had placekicker Jamie Christensen not been injured, particularly when he did not play in the pivotal overtime loss game at Arkansas.

One doesn't think about it, but it is bad luck for an opponent (therefore, good luck) if the opponent has a key injury. That, too, is part of injury luck.

In addition to quarterback, sometimes it is simple to spot a position where an injury will be disastrous. A couple of years ago that position was center. Alabama was undefeated until J.B. Closner was injured in the 2005 Mississippi State game. Bama then lost two games without him to end regular season play.



Last year it seemed Alabama had no depth problems at tailback. But when three of them—Terry Grant, Roy Upchurch and Glen Coffee—were lost for the season, there were depth concerns.

This year it would seem that tight end, wide receiver and running back (again) are positions of good depth. Almost anyone would point out immediately the precariousness of Bama depth at defensive tackle going into 2007.

Alabama has another factor that not many college football teams have. That is "name," being one of the truly elite of the game. That does not mean the 2007 team is special, certainly not that the 2006 team was. In fact, it has been a long time–15 years–since Alabama won a national championship. Only a couple of times since the Gene Stallings era (1990-96) has Alabama been anywhere near the national title hunt late in the season, in 1999 and in 2005.

But all those national championships, all those Southeastern Conference titles, all those bowl games and all-star performers and National Football Foundation Hall of Fame members add up to a tradition unmatched by all but a very few. And none of those few are regulars on Alabama's schedule.

In years past that tradition was a bonus for the Crimson Tide. Most opponents were psychologically at a disadvantage before the game kicked off. In many years, including recent seasons, that tradition may have been a burden. Like a young heavyweight boxer building his reputation and record with a knockout of an aging has-been, many have been joyed to kick the Alabama teams that have been only a shadow of past Bama squads. A lot of teams with not much else to show have boasted of their wins over the Tide.

Players report the first week in August to begin preparation for the 2007 season. Once upon a time these were known as "two-a-days," but health concerns have reduced the amount of on-the-field time prior to the start of fall classes. There will be three days of one practice each in shorts, then two more days of one practice for acclimatation. After that there can be two practices every other day with one practice on alternate days until the start of classes (at Alabama, August 22). The formula gives every team an equal number of practice opportunities before the beginning of games.

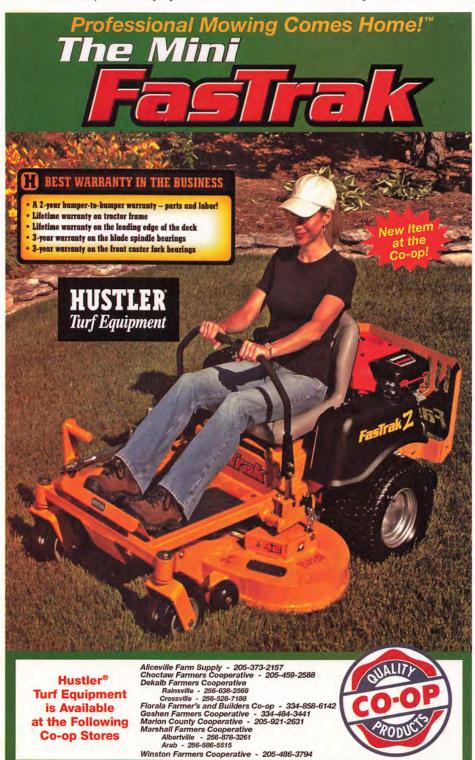
A few years ago there was a change from the newcomers having the opportunity to report early for practice orientation. Alabama (as all NCAA teams) will begin work with a squad of 105 (generally speaking the 85 or so scholarshipped players and the rest walk-ons, some returning and some new).

When classes begin the squad can be expanded.

It's no secret that big-time college football is now a year-round proposition for

the players. Not long after the completion of a season, the team begins an off-season program. That's followed by spring practice, then more off-season work, voluntary pass skeleton type summer drills, and fall camp.

And that leads to the season, which begins this year with Alabama hosting Western Carolina on September 1.



FOOTBALL BY MITCH DOBBS

THE OFFENSE

Tons Of Talent And Loads Of Experience

ast year was supposed to be year of the tailback in Alabama football. With an inexperienced first-year starter under center, veterans at both the tailback and fullback positions and a young but improving offensive line, all signs pointed to an Alabama offense that would be anchored by its ground game; an offense that would try to nurture and grow its new quarterback as the season progressed.

Tailback Kenneth Darby was nearing Alabama's all-time career rushing record, and was poised to become the only player in Alabama history to rush for 1,000 yards in three different seasons. Lead-blocking for Darby was LéRon McClain, an NFL prospect because of his ability to deliver devastating blocks. Alabama also had smart, experienced Tim Castille in the backfield as a fullback and occasional ball carrier. But there is a reason Musso, Humphrey, Alexander, or any of Alabama's other great running backs in its history, never went over 1,000 yards in three different seasons. It is exceedingly difficult, and requires not only talent but good fortune.

Darby was slow out of the gate, never really found a comfortable groove and running lanes weren't always opened by the offensive line. Alabama was quick to turn to its veteran receivers for offense, and the quarterback played with as much poise as anyone could have expected. As a result, the 2006 Crimson Tide was one of the most passheavy offenses in school history, gaining a higher percentage of its total offense through the air (2,767 passing, 1,600 rushing, 63.4 per cent by passing) than any team since 1969, when Scott Hunter led Bama's air attack to 2,707 passing yards (66.2 per cent, of which Hunter had 2,199 yards) against just 1,381 rushing yards.

Alabama returns all the key players from last year's passing game, including John Parker Wilson's 2,707 passing yards, DJ Hall's record-setting 1,058 receiving yards, Keith Brown's 590 receiving yards, Will Oakley's 223 receiving yards, Nikita Stover's 192 receiving yards, Matt Caddell's 150 receiving yards and Travis McCall's 105 receiving yards. In total, 10 of the 13 men who caught passes a year ago



Stoart McNair

return, representing 2,371 of Bama's 2,767 receiving yards (85.7 per cent).

The Crimson Tide loses 1,000 of its 1,600 rushing yards from a season ago, including Darby's team-leading 835, Castille's 129 and McClain's 64 net rushing yards.

In 2007, Alabama will have a different, though still talented and fairly experienced, stable of backs, including 293 yards of production from Jimmy Johns, the secondleading rusher from last season. It will also get back Glen Coffee, who was hurt last year but pitched in 179 yards rushing from two years ago. It was tailback Terry Grant who most caught Nick Saban's eye in the spring, however. Grant has experience from a year ago, too, as a kick returner from three games before a season-ending injury. The talented, but oft-injured Roy Upchurch will be looking for his first healthy year, and newcomer Jamar Taylor will try to parlay his early arrival for spring practice into early playing time in the fall.

The starting five offensive linemen are all returning, although all might not return as

starters at their old positions. Junior center Antoine Caldwell is the leader of the group, while sophomore phenom left tackle Andre Smith is a star in the making. B.J. Stabler and Marlon Davis shared starts at guard last year, and they both return. Justin Britt and Chris Capps each bring back starting experience from a year ago.

But where there recently were no more than five or six viable candidates to play offensive line, a recruiting focus on offensive lineman is starting to pay off. Mike Johnson, who subbed in well for injured players at right tackle in the spring, and Evan Cardwell have experience as back-ups, and Alex Stadler and David Ross have significant potential to help this year. Bama's top two tight ends also return. Travis McCall rounds out the group of nine returning offensive starters.

But with all of Alabama's talent, it's important to ask what kind of overall performance they are returning from. In comparison to the rest of the Southeastern Conference, Alabama's offense was below average. The Tide ranked 9th in scoring (22.9 points per game), 6th in passing, 7th in passing efficiency, 9th in rushing, 8th in total offense (335.9 yards per game), 7th in first downs, 6th in third and fourth down conversions, 8th in giving up sacks. The offensive highlight was ranking first in time of possession.

The main problem Alabama's offense had was not being able to get into the end zone. Bama scored 28 touchdowns, ahead of only Mississippi State (24) and Mississippi (20) in the league.

Red zone figures can be deceiving. The Southeastern Conference ranks teams according to the percentage of times scored in the red zone–not differentiating whether that score was a touchdown or a field goal. The weakness of ranking teams in this manner is obvious. Touchdowns are worth twice as many points as field goals, yet they are given equal weight in calculating red zone stats. In this official method, Alabama was 7th in the league last year. Ole Miss was 8th.

But red zone statistics calculated in a simple "points per trip" category instead

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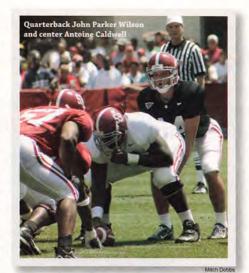


giving equal weight to touchdowns and field goals reveals 2006 Alabama being atrocious. Bama scored an average of 3.77 points on each trip inside the 20-yard line, ahead of only Mississippi (3.74) in the SEC. For comparison, LSU was the best red zone team in the league, averaging 5.36 points for every trip into the red zone, and Auburn was 6th in the league with 4.82. Alabama had 20 touchdowns and 20 field goals in 53 trips into the red zone.

Alabama offensive coordinator Major Applewhite's Rice offense had no such scoring problems last season, averaging 27 points per game. Rice averaged 4.64 points for every trip into the red zone.

But Applewhite's success at Rice is only one ingredient in the 2007 Alabama offensive mix. Alabama likely won't run the exact offense Rice did. For one thing, the Southeastern Conference is a league with punishing defenders who are often bigger and as fast or faster than the offensive players. That is not so in every league, as Florida's Urban Meyer found out in his first year at Florida from Utah. (And did he ever learn quickly!)

As it is in every aspect of the program, Nick Saban's imprint will be visible on Alabama's offense. Joe Pendry, who was an old Saban coaching colleague and Alabama's associate head coach for offense, had some input in its



development and installation, too.

Ultimately, as always, players will make the difference, and Alabama has tons of talent and loads of experience on the offensive side. Although the Crimson Tide lost its starting tailback and fullback to graduation, there are experienced backfield back-ups waiting in the wings to take over the starring role, and considering Darby's disappointing senior season, there will likely be a bounce in productivity from the tailback spot.

The fullback won't disappear completely from Alabama's offense, but fullback Baron Huber is likely to see less action than either Castille or McClain did a year ago. With the exception of an occasional receiver screen, screens and draws were a rarity in the previous offensive scheme, and almost never productive. Play action passing was only a waste of time because it was often executed hastily and there was never any real commitment to the running game.

That seems to have changed for the better this spring, with a more aggressive and committed running game to make it all possible. The true test is not when it's Alabama vs. Alabama in the A-Day game, but will come later.

A look at last year's performance and this year's depth chart, along with the record of big offensive numbers and confidence in a new scheme, points to a formidable and balanced, perhaps lethal, offensive attack from the Crimson Tide. Predicting what will happen is a precarious business, however. Just look at what we all thought this time last year.

Here's a look at the Tide by position going into fall camp:

QUARTERBACK

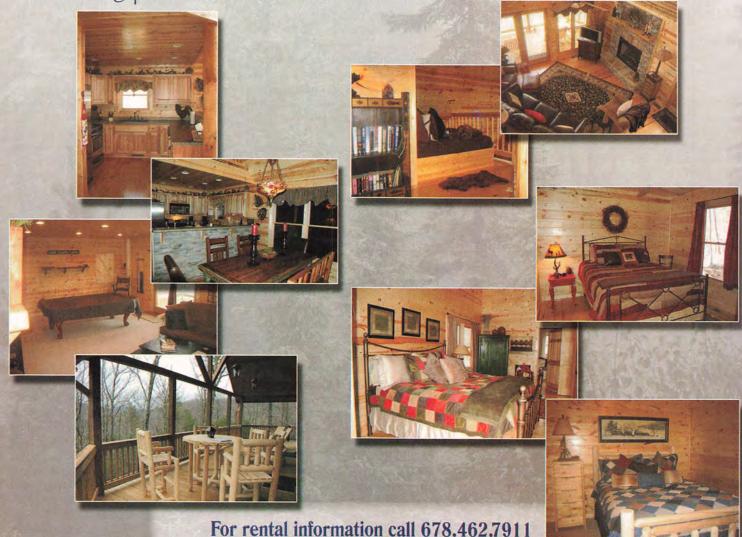
After biding his time on campus as a grayshirt in $2004\,\mathrm{and}\,\mathrm{backing}\,\mathrm{up}\,\mathrm{Brodie}\,\mathrm{Croyle}$



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with a few meaningless snaps in four different games in 2005, John Parker Wilson was more ready than anyone knew to take the reins as starter last year. He bested Croyle's single-season marks, setting records for passing yards (2,707), attempts (379), touchdowns (17) and completions (216). He was durable, starting all 13 games and playing 811 snaps, second-most among Alabama's offensive players. All the passing didn't come without risk, however. Wilson threw 10 interceptions, the most by an Alabama quarterback since Croyle in 2003.

Wilson has wonderful natural playmaking ability. Coaches and teammates came away wowed after Wilson's first practice during December and Music City Bowl preparation in 2004. He didn't know the playbook, but was still able to find open target after open target going on his instincts. As he's matured he has learned more about when to throw the ball away; when a chance isn't worth taking. Developing that veteran mentality is what he worked on most during the spring.

Wilson has a strong, but not superstrong, arm and a good throwing motion, The deep outs and streak patterns are the most difficult to throw, but Wilson usually has good touch and accuracy on short and intermediate passes.

His legs are also an asset, and while the coaching staff has been coy about exactly what its plans are for Wilson as a runner, it's likely that Alabama fans could be reintroduced to a play or two where the quarterback has the option to hold onto the ball, such as a zone read play most college football teams run from the shotgun formation.

Wilson must stay healthy for Alabama to be able to cash in on all of its offensive weapons, but Saban will have three men vying for the back-up spot in the fall.

Redshirt freshman Greg McElroy was the back-up in the spring while 2006 back-up Jimmy Barnes rehabilitated an injured knee. McElroy is also an instinctive type quarterback from a successful high school program in Texas, and a good athlete. McElroy's arm strength needs improvement to allow him to make all the throws a quarterback needs to be able to make. One thing that will give McElroy at least an initial leg up on the competition is the fact that other than Wilson he is the only quarterback Saban has seen in person.

Jimmy Barnes tore his ACL in bowl practice, requiring knee surgery and months of rehabilitation, but the sophomore who was Wilson's back-up a year ago after Marc Guillon quit the team should be back to full strength by fall camp. Barnes was able to dress and participate in some drills during spring



Shuart McNair

training, giving him some knowledge of the new offense, but not having live repetitions in the new system was a disadvantage. Barnes was a system quarterback at Los Alamitos in California, reading defenses and hitting targets mostly from the shotgun formation. Last year Barnes did perform well when called on in a game, completing 6 of 11 passes for 45 yards against Florida International, including a touchdown pass to Matt Caddell.

Another Texas quarterback, 6-3, 205-pound true freshman Nick Fanuzzi could make the competition for the back-up spot a three-man race. Fanuzzi was recruited by Major Applewhite, who was familiar with Fanuzzi when he was in closer proximity at Rice. Fanuzzi was ranked the number 32 quarterback prospect by Scout.com, and he completed 102 of 194 passes (.526) for 1,533 yards as a senior at Churchill High in San Antonio. Fanuzzi added 1,000 yards on 182 rush attempts.

The three-man battle for back-up is likely to be intense, but not prolonged. Not long into fall camp the coaching staff will need to focus on game planning with the starter and a back-up, rather than have a lengthy competition play out. It's likely there will be more repetitions in practice to go around, more than the measly one or two reps per day Alabama's third team quarterback normally took under the previous staff.

WIDE RECEIVER

If there's someone there to deliver it, Alabama will have plenty of men who can receive a pass and then run with it. Seniors DJ Hall and Keith Brown might be the SEC's most underappreciated receiving tandem, but they will be looking to change that status this fall.



Benjamin Cohe

If he has just an average year, Hall will have the Alabama career record for most receptions and most receiving yards before he leaves. He has a shot at the receiving touchdowns record, too. Hall led the team in receiving with 57 catches for 1,014 yards and five touchdownsboth records. He's the only Bama player to have five straight 100-yard receiving games, and had seven 100-yard games on the season (another record).

Brown is more the deep threat. With six more catches, he will have a higher yards-percatch average than any Tide receiver except for Ozzie Newsome with a minimum of 100 receptions. Brown had 43 catches for 583 yards last year and three touchdowns. On Bama's career lists, he's ninth in receptions with 94 catches and sixth in yards with 1,520. yards.

But it's not just the Hall and Brown show. Junior Will Oakley missed the spring after having shoulder surgery in the off-season, but he proved himself as a sure-hands man last year, the first time he was able to overcome nagging hamstring problems. Oakley is speedy enough to go deep, but he usually runs good routes and gets to the first-down sticks when needed most.

Junior Nikita Stover could also provide a strike at nearly any time, and he nearly did so the first time he was ever in a game at Alabama. A shoestring tackle kept him from going into the history books and held his accomplishment to a key third down conversion that helped seal the game against Vanderbilt. Stover has great straight-line speed and with it the ability to outrun most defenders down the sideline.

Senior Matt Caddell has battled drops in the past, but is a quality all-around receiver. Freshman Mike McCoy played only a handful of snaps last year, wasting a redshirt year, but that was because he showed great potential in fall camp a year ago. Earl Alexander was one of the most coveted prospects in Alabama last year, and is looking to crack the rotation in the fall. Jonathan Lowe was a freshman all-star at Mississippi State before transferring to Bama, and has among the best open-field moves on the team. His diminutive stature will make him a return specialist first, but he could see some passes, too. That leaves little room for newcomers Brandon Gibson, Marquis Maze and Darius Hanks or walk-on talent Darwin Salaam, but receiver is a position that doesn't discriminate based on experience as much as, say, quarterback. Tyrone Prothro is expected to remain on the sideline while continuing rehabilitation from the broken leg he suffered on October 1, 2005.

TAILBACK

Nick Saban made very clear he didn't have a depth chart-at least not one that's available for public consumption-during his first spring at The Capstone. In fact, when the proposed cover of Alabama's spring media guide was presented for approval, Saban balked on the original concept because he didn't want any of the players pictured on the cover presumed as owning a position. The final production featured three pictures of Saban: one in the foreground, one inset and one in the background. That makes things especially perplexing at tailback.

One looking at last year's numbers and what Alabama lost at the position, and concluding Alabama will be weak in the running game in 2007 could be sorely mistaken. This could be the secret ingredient that makes the offense among the SEC's best. Last your was a disappointment, and this year's will be if it is not much improved. None of the backs are widely heralded but all can play, and each offers something a little bit different.

Freshman Terry Grant certainly had the most traction among tailbacks in the spring. Saban talked him up after Bama's first two scrimmages, and Grant took the first play from scrimmage of the A-Day game, a swing pass from John Parker Wilson he ran for seven yards.

Looking back to last fall's first scrimmage when he wowed spectators and opened the coaching staff's eyes to getting him on the field as a true freshman, Grant might rank among the best scrimmagers of all time. His 148 yards and two touchdowns on 13 carries in the first scrimmage moved him from the "afterthought/redshirt" category last year into "ready for primetime" position. He is

elusive and explosive, with an upside ability in the neighborhood of Prothro.

Grant didn't pass Darby on the depth chart, however, and was used primarily as a kick returner in the first three games before a shoulder injury shortened his season. Grant met all the NCAA criteria for a medical redshirt and is still considered a freshman. He spent most of the year on the sidelines and in rehabilitation. When Saban's arrival cleared the slate for everyone, Grant quickly rose back to the top in spring practice.

"We're still looking for a tandem at running back," Saban said, "to get someone else who has consistency that we need. Terry would be a great guy, he'd be the Domanick Davis (who played tailback for Saban at LSU, and professionally with the Houston Texans) and have a big strong guy and give us the ability to feature both those guys in different ways."

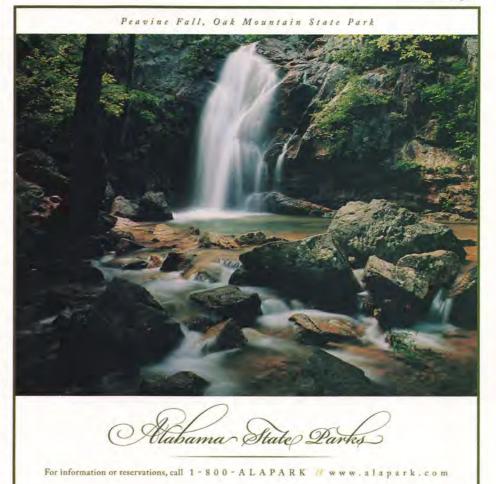
The other part of that tandem could be any one of four backs: Glen Coffee, Jimmy Johns, Roy Upchurch or Jamar Taylor.

Sophomore Glen Coffee was with the second-team offense for the A-Day game, but had only four carries. Coffee redshirted last year because of injury. In the summer he had surgery for a sports hernia, and in the fall a knee injury kept him out until he was too far behind to catch up. Coffee was in his best physical shape entering spring, however, and said he was picking up the offense and proving to be a dependable back.

That's more than could be said for Bama's top returning rusher Jimmy Johns for at least part of the spring. Johns was suspended from two of the 15 spring practices for missing too many classes. Johns rushed for 293 yards on 66 carries last year, and had the highest yards per rush attempt (4.4) among running backs. He won the Jerry Duncan "I Like to Practice" spring award handed out on A-Day, because, as Saban said, not going to class and winning an award for liking to practice have nothing to do with one another.

Upchurch has had surgery before each of the past two seasons, getting bone defects in each of his feet corrected. He has participated in each of the last two springs. He needs to reverse the trend and stay healthy for the fall, but if he does he is as talented as those above him on the depth chart. Upchurch was the most

Continued on page 20





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GRAB LIFE BY THE HORNS



OFFENSIVE DEPTH CHART

Split End

Keith Brown: Might be a great one if he can stay on the field Matt Caddell: Needs to be more reliable as a pass-catcher Mike McCoy: Could be on fast track up depth chart Will Oakley: Injuries have kept him from more playing time Brandon Gibson: Even though depth is good, this freshman may play

Flanker

DJ Hall: On pace to shatter Bama career receiving record Nikita Stover: Great deep threat Earl Alexander: Settling in after move from prep quarterback

Left Tackle

Andre Smith: He can rank among Bama's all-time best Cody Davis: Hopefully can give Andre Smith some relief

Left Guard

Justin Britt: Second year on offense could be much better David Ross: Could be important back-up at guard or center

Center

Antoine Caldwell: All-star candidate, versatile leader of line Evan Cardwell: Solid back-up at critical position

Right Guard

Marlon Davis: Taking over starting job on permanent basis Taylor Pharr: Experimented on defense, could end up at tackle Alex Stadler: Came to Alabama with outstanding credentials

Right Tackle

B.J. Stabler: Move to tackle from right guard hampered by spring injury Mike Johnson: Showed potential in spring, but inexperienced Chris Capps: Two-year starter going to have to work for playing time

Tight End

Travis McCall: Caught Saban's eye despite injury-limited spring Nick Walker: Regular back-up in first two seasons Preston Dial: Bama using several tight ends likely means big role

Quarterback

John Parker Wilson: Focus in spring was limiting mental errors Greg McElroy: Needs to improve arm strength, but picked up system Jimmy Barnes: Limited by knee surgery, has ground to make up Nick Fanuzzi: Good runner and passer should get early look

Tailback

Terry Grant: Speedster at top of close, crowded tailback field Glen Coffee: Potential to be power back who compliments Grant Jimmy Johns: Top back-up last year and potentially outstanding Roy Upchurch: Needs to prove himself with a healthy fall Jamar Taylor: True freshman helped himself with spring arrival

Fullbacl

Baron Huber: First in line to replace two outstanding graduates Patrick Hanrahan: Very good blocker could end up at another spot Jeramie Griffin: Incoming freshman could be a star down the road



Chunci Makle

explosive back on the field for Alabama during spring a year ago, so the potential is there.

Jamar Taylor enrolled at The University in January, and aside from high school film no one in the media has really seen how good he could be. Saban mentioned Taylor right along with the others for most of the spring, however, and he has a 15-practice, one-semester-in-the-weightroom advantage over his fellow true freshmen. Taylor had 10 carries for 44 yards in the A-Day game, and he has the looks of another power, straight ahead type back.

While Grant is the only guy who distinguished himself in the spring, things could change in the fall (much as they changed in Grant's favor last fall when he was a relative unknown as a true freshman), and another guy could also come up to share the load. Demetrius Goode, an incoming freshman from Hargrave Military Academy, could be the next Grant. Also, with the length of the season there could be a different guy carrying the mail at different times during the season, but devastating injuries notwithstanding, Bama should get consistent production out of the tailback.

FULLBACK

No one expects that the fullback has been eliminated from the Alabama offensive attack, but it's possible the position could take a one-year hiatus. After four years with two superb fullbacks in Le'Ron McClain and Tim Castille, inexperienced sophomore Baron Huber got most of the work at fullback in the spring. Newcomer Jeramie Griffin, from South Panola High School in Batesville, Mississippi, is also listed at fullback. With Saban's stated desire to do as much as possible to get the best 11 players on the field, expect Alabama to compensate for this relative shortage with one back formations with two tight ends (or one tight and three wide receivers) as well as more shotgun than Alabama has run in the past four seasons.

TIGHT END

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It's not necessarily that throwing a pass to the tight end is the secret to a successful offense, but more a product of an opposing defense being stretched vertically and horizontally, leaving the middle more susceptible to a tight end roaming free. The first and usually most important responsibility for the position is blocking, and Alabama returns a starter with an excellent reputation in that category.

Junior Travis McCall caught eight passes a year ago, and each one seemed like a brand new surprise. That's because McCall wasn't at tight end for his receiving ability. The converted defensive lineman has been a punisher at tight end for two years, however, and before he strained a calf that kept him out for much of the spring, he had time to impress Saban. McCall will not light up the scoreboard, but he will be a crucial part of Alabama's running game.

Nick Walker will compete for playing time with McCall, and share it when the Tide is in a two-tight formation, which could be a significant amount of plays each game. Walker had only three catches last year for 29 yards, and nine for 120 yards the year prior.

Preston Dial, a redshirt freshman, is Bama's third tight end. He had two impressive catches at A-Day, including a 25-yard gain on an athletic grab near the sideline.

Saban has said he likes to have a lot of players with tight end type bodies. Charles Hoke continues to mature as a back-up.

Saban signed another tight end in February, 6-4, 215-pound Chris Underwood.

CENTER

Junior Antoine Caldwell might be Alabama's best center since All-America Dwight Stephenson. He started all 13 games and logged 810 plays last season, and as a freshman he started at left guard for the entire regular season before moving to center for the Cotton Bowl. When times got tough against Auburn's Quinten Groves last season, Caldwell moved to right tackle. Andre Smith might have the most natural talent, but Caldwell is the Crimson Tide's best for now. He's on the list of preseason candidates for best center, called the Rimington watch list, and he should be a viable candidate for the Jacobs Trophy, given to the best blocker in the Southeastern Conference. And he's got a back-up.

Redshirt sophomore Evan Cardwell played center last year whenever Caldwell was needed to go to guard or tackle. He did much of his work in the two-minute drill, snapping out of the shotgun formation. Cardwell had 140 snaps in 12 games. Cardwell gives Alabama offensive line coach Joe Pendry



Benjamin Cohen

a viable option at center if he feels Caldwell would be better used at another position.

Redshirt freshman David Ross is primarily a guard, but also took some snaps at center during the spring.

GUARD

In 2004 and 2005 Alabama had a shortage of SEC capable offensive linemen. In 2006 the line was back to the point where there were enough men to usually field a decent group, but there was little competition for spots and very little depth. A focus on offensive linemen in recruiting has led to promising young talent, presenting options on the line, even while the group is probably a year away from reaching its peak.

Senior Justin Britt started at left guard in all 13 games for Alabama last year in his first year on the offensive line. Britt, originally a defensive tackle, moved over to offense in 2006. Britt has a known mean streak, probably the result of two older brothers—Taylor and Wesley—who toughened him up, and who preceded him at Alabama. He was the player most affected by Saban's stern nofighting policy implemented in the spring. He is a better run blocker than pass blocker, and was sometimes replaced by Caldwell in two-minute situations.

Juniors B.J. Stabler and Marlon Davis shared the starting duties at right guard last year, and both had nagging injuries. Stabler continued to suffer from a knee injury in the spring, and missed most of the significant work. He had surgery in the off-season for the second year in a row to try to get rid of the pain playing caused him. Davis played 349

snaps in 11 games last year in three starts, while Stabler started eight games and logged 449 snaps.

Ross is one of the promising redshirt freshman guards. In his high school state final game his senior year at Homewood, Ross played every position on the offensive line at some point during the game and handled long-snapping duties on a punt. His size and agility best suit him to play inside at either guard or center, and he could compete for playing time in the fall.

Two other redshirt freshmen, Taylor Pharr and Alex Stadler, worked at guard in the spring. Pharr had a brief experiment on defense before moving back to offense, and worked at tackle last year before moving inside to guard.

TACKLE

Not only was Andre Smith able to come in and start at left tackle-perhaps the most demanding and important spot on the field with exception of quarterback-as a true freshman, he ended up with more plays in the year than anyone on the Crimson Tide football team by some 30 plays. Smith was often dominant, yet sometimes schooled by a veteran defensive end with advanced pass-rushing moves, which shows there is plenty of room for improvement. He laid some devastating blocks on defensive backs when Alabama would run a wide receiver screen to his side.

The coaches' focus or Smith in the spring was as much off the field as on. They put him on a diet and have asked him to report for fall camp around 325 pounds, about 20 pounds less than his playing weight a year ago.

Stabler moved out to right tackle before he was injured in the spring to fill in for Chris Capps. Capps required shoulder surgery in the off-season which kept him out of contact in the spring. Stabler's experiment on the outside was cut short with his own injury problems, so it remains to be seen whether he will wind up at guard or tackle in the fall.

It was sophomore Mike Johnson who benefited most from the playing time that opened up in the spring due to Capps' and Stabler's injuries. Johnson got schooled a few times in spring scrimmages by veteran end Wallace Gilberry, but he showed some potential at A-Day. Smith will hold down left tackle, but perhaps the biggest mystery of the fall will be the starter at right tackle. It could conceivably be Capps, Stabler, Johnson, or maybe even Caldwell if the staff gets creative with offensive line shuffling.

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FOOTBALL BY KIRK McNAIR

THE DEFENSE

Reasons For Optimism And For Pessimism

Rootball fans talk the good game: offense is for show, but championships are won on defense. A homily such as "You can't lose if they don't score" pops to mind.

Perhaps because players come and go in a relatively short time while, ideally, the coaching staff is more constant, the level of optimism regarding a team is based in great part on coaching. There is a substantive basis for that philosophy.

But there is also the knowledge that the players have to do the work. Former Alabama Head Coach Gene Stallings talked about the job of coaches being to put players in a position to make those plays, but it also helps to have a very good player in that position.

In many respects, Alabama is rebuilding its defense for the second consecutive year. Last season the Tide had to fill in positions vacated by the likes of linebacker DeMeco Ryans (who went on to be the NFL defensive rookie of the year), end Mark Anderson (runner-up for that honor), safety Roman Harper, etc.

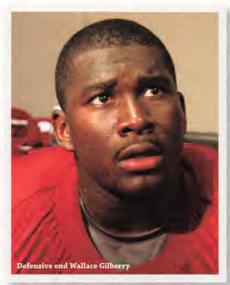
Alabama followers have expected their coaches to be able to manufacture a good defense. A handful of Crimson Tide defensive coordinators have legendary status—Ken Donahue under Paul Bryant, Bill Oliver under Stallings, Joe Kines under Ray Perkins and Mike Shula.

Thus, optimism abounds in the Bama camp. In the days of Steve Spurrier and Urban Meyer and in the wake of Shula, Alabama welcomes a head coach considered among the best defensive minds. Nick Saban has the credentials. Saban teams have success in every area, but are particularly notable for fierce, effective defensive units.

Alabama has a staff of highly regarded assistants who are implementing the Saban defensive philosophy. Veteran Kevin Steele is defensive coordinator and inside linebackers coach. Kirby Smart is assistant head coach for defense and runs the secondary (with Saban also hands on with the cornerbacks). Lance Thompson coaches outside linebackers, Bo Davis the line.

Saban attracted a staff of excellent recruiters. It's no secret that coaching very good players is conducive to having a good team. Some incoming freshmen are expected to have the opportunity to contribute in 2007.

The defensive losses from last season may



Benjamin Cohen

not seem as dramatic as those of the Ryans-Anderson level, but the numbers are significant. Alabama lost all of its experienced tackles, two of three starting linebackers, and two experienced defensive backs. It doesn't necessarily take losses of a lot of players to affect defensive performance. In 1966 Alabama gave up 37 points in a 10-game regular season. The next year, opening up against Florida State, Bama had essentially the same players on defense. Alabama fans had to wonder, as did Bryant in a memorable television recording, "What the hell is going on out there?" as Alabama and FSU battled to a 37-37 tie. The Crimson Tide had given up as many points in one game as it had the entire previous regular season.

A number of components go into defensive success, including the effectiveness of the offense. If the offense keeps the football for long periods, the opposing offense can't be amassing yards and points.

If there were just one good scheme with which to play defense, all teams would use the same alignment.

Much has been made of Alabama "switching" to a 3-4 defense this season. What Saban actually has promised is a bit different than three defensive linemen and four linebackers. One of the outside linebackers, Jack in Saban terminology, is as likely to slide to the defensive line and put the alignment at 4-3.

Additionally, Saban has said that Tide practices in the spring involved use of "five or six" defensive backs over 50 per cent of the time. Many snaps in the A-Day Game showed Alabama's Jack linebacker up on the line and five defensive backs, in effect a 4-2-5.

There are no rules for defense. The offense has to have seven men on the line of scrimmage, but the defense doesn't have to have any and can have as many as 11. Miami's Heisman Trophy quarterback Gino Torretta's timeout when facing an 11-man Alabama "line" in the 1993 Sugar Bowl is one of the enduring memories of the Tide's national championship success.

Last year the normal alignment for Alabama defensively was three linemen, three linebackers and five defensive backs. Most coaches don't try to put a square peg into a round hole. Available personnel dictates to great extent the defensive plan.

It is the job of the offense to exploit any weakness of the defense. The defense uses disguise and surprise. The secondary may play zone or man or a combination. What looks like a 3-4 might be a 4-3 at the snap of the ball. Unlike the offense, the defense can move as many men as it wants at any time.

At its simplest, a defense must deny points to the opponent. When points are inevitably surrendered, it is better to give up a field goal than a touchdown.

More than that the successful defense will force turnovers, interceptions and fumbles. The defense plays a major role in field position. A good offense is on the field for long periods of time, while a good defense is on and off in a hurry.

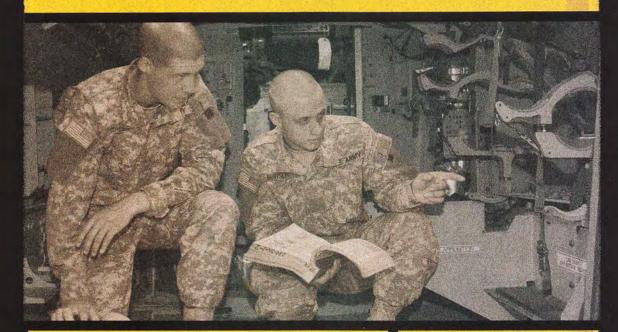
At its very best, the defense can score points.

Most analyses of 2007 Alabama football
put the onus on the offense for success. Saban
and company can be expected to get the most of
Crimson Tide defenders.

END

Going into spring practice, the end positions appeared to be among Alabama's best. Back were returning starter Wallace Gilberry on the left side and two men who had split starting time and playing time at the right end spot, Keith Saunders and Bobby Greenwood. Saunders had really been a surprise of 2006, coming from

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back in the pack to win the starting job ahead of Greenwood, a big play man in his 2005 freshman season. As it turned out, Saunders and Greenwood were used about equally last year.

This spring brought another Saunders surprise. He was moved to the new Jack linebacker position. Also moving from defensive end to outside linebacker was Zeke Knight, the former wide receiver who is now at weakside linebacker.

One of the notable aspects of Alabama's defense in the spring was the shift into a four-man front. That involved Saunders sliding up to an end spot. And that made Greenwood more or less a tackle.

Saban pointed out during the spring that players like Saunders and Knight did not have the bodies to play end, thus the changes. Saunders noted that Greenwood was able to handle the physical work of moving inside when the defense shifted to a four-man front.

It is not unreasonable to expect big things from defensive end this season. Gilberry has been an over-achiever since earning a late scholarship offer in the summer of 2003, shortly after an outstanding performance in the Alabama-Mississippi High School All-Star Game and just weeks before he was to head to junior college. He was a regular back-up for two seasons and is a solid first team player. Greenwood has had a knack for the big play.

Alabama lost one key end back-up to graduation. Chris Harris left Alabama with the honor of having played in every game for three years without ever starting a game.

There was some experimentation with Brandon Deaderick as a defensive tackle last season, but in the spring he was back at right defensive end. He had outstanding credentials as a defensive end coming to Alabama.

When last year's coaching staff talked about true freshmen who were playing on the scout team and being held out, one of the first names mentioned was defensive end Milton Talbert. He was the only defensive lineman brought in with last year's recruiting class. He's working behind Gilberry.

While a couple of ends got moved to linebacker in the spring, a linebacker got moved to defensive end. Charlie Kirschman, who was redshirted last year, had been a middle linebacker. Now he's working at right end behind Greenwood and Deaderick.

Alabama's signing class included a highly regarded defensive end prospect. Saban reached into Louisiana to get Luther Davis.

TACKLE

There is only one tackle in the nomenclature of Alabama defense. The big problem going into spring practice was finding one tackle.

Bama was hit hard by graduation at the tackle position. Last year the Tide sometimes



Stuart McNa

used two tackles, sometimes just one. Late bloomer Dominic Lee and one-time walk-on J.P. Adams split time at nose tackle in 2006. Jeremy Clark was a three-year regular at left tackle. All are gone.

Two lettermen returned at tackle, but neither worked there this spring. One moved to another position, while the other was recuperating from injury and unable to participate in contact work.

Everyone agreed Brandon Fanney was never going to be big enough to be a defensive tackle. He moved to Jack linebacker in the spring. Lorenzo Washington, who is still young for a college sophomore despite a year of prep school in 2004 and a redshirt season in 2005, had very limited action in 2006. While he has recuperated a shoulder injury and surgery, he has built himself up to decent size, but missing all contact work in the spring puts him back.

Defensive tackle provided perhaps the most pleasant surprise of spring practice. Alabama's coaching staff went to the offensive line looking for help. The first experiment with an offensive lineman was a look at Taylor Pharr. After a few practices Pharr was back on offense and the coaching staff next experimented with Brian Motley. That proved to be an excellent change.

Motley, a redshirt freshman, went from one of the pack among offensive line substitutes to the number one nose tackle. That's the good news. The bad news is that this is a position which has not been solidified, particularly from a depth standpoint.

Byron Walton was redshirted as a freshman and had almost no playing time last year. He'll need an impressive summer and fall camp.

There was another position move in the spring as former middle linebacker Matt Collins was shifted to the defensive line to help shore things up. This will be a challenge for Collins, a former walk-on who would be considered undersized for defensive tackle at his listed weight of under 250 pounds.

In football, defensive tackles are like cannon to an army. It's hard to imagine having too many. The Shula staff was deficient in recruiting defensive linemen. Saban's staff has loaded up on new defensive tackles, but it remains to be seen which, if any, true freshmen might be able to contribute at this key position. Kerry Murphy is the most heralded of a group that includes (alphabetically) Josh Chapman, Jeremy Elder, Nick Gentry and Alfred McCullough.

INSIDE LINEBACKER

Matt Collins started last season as the number one middle linebacker in Alabama's three-man linebacker corps. But no one was surprised when redshirt freshman Prince Hall moved ahead of Collins early in the season. Hall, who was highly regarded as both a fullback and linebacker as a California prep star, had one of the biggest plays of the year for Bama's defense when he recovered a fumble and ran it back 50 yards for a touchdown against Florida in Gainesville. He is Alabama's leading returning tackler (in on 77 stops).

There are two inside linebacker spots in the Crimson Tide defense—middle and strongside. Hall, who was the SEC Freshman Defensive Player of the Year last season, is solid number one at middle linebacker. One of the duties that goes with the position is calling the defense, and Hall seemed comfortable with that responsibility in the spring.

A nice surprise for the Alabama defense is the play of former Middle Tennessee linebacker Darren Mustin, who transferred to Alabama and sat out in 2005. Last year he played primarily on special teams, and most expected that would be where he would contribute. But in the spring Mustin, who had been listed as a back-up to Hall at middle linebacker, earned an award as the best walk-on taking over the strongside linebacker position.

Linebacker (inside and outside) is another area where depth is a potential problem as the Shula staff let the cupboard get a bit bare.

Charlie Higgenbotham is a redshirt freshman who drew good reviews from Alabama's previous coaching staff during a redshirt season. He worked behind Hall in the spring.

At strongside the back-ups were undersized veteran Marcel Stamps and Eryk Anders, a prep defensive lineman who saw very limited action as a redshirt freshman in 2006.

Alabama's highest rated signee is linebacker Rolando McClain and it would not be a surprise to see him in the playing rotation as a true freshman at one of the two inside spots.

OUTSIDE LINEBACKER

Alabama lost both starting outside

i laugh. i click. i capture. i print. i cherish. all thanks to one little card.

Whether it's a night out on the town or an afternoon at the pool, some moments just beg to be captured. So shoot away, but be sure that there's a SanDisk® memory card inside. It's secure,

reliable, and just so happens to be the flash memory more people rely on than any other. And there's more to SanDisk than memory cards for your camera. You can play more of your favorite tunes on our 8GB Sansa® MP3 players or extend your cell phone's memory with our mobile cards. Get more out of your gaming device with a SanDisk gaming card, and for your brilliant ideas - Cruzer® USB flash drives. Because where you store your life should be as amazing as life itself.



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DEFENSIVE DEPTH CHART

Left End

Wallace Gilberry: Key to effective pass rush Milton Talbert: Redshirt freshman has caught some eyes Luther Davis: Maybe best pass-rushing signee

Nose Tackle

Brian Motley: Former OL one of major surprises of spring Byron Walton: Good conditioning program will help him Lorenzo Washington: Needs to show what can do when healthy Matt Collins: This will be challenge for former middle linebacker Kerry Murphy: Most-heralded of five incoming freshman tackles

Right End

Bobby Greenwood: Consistent last two years, showing maturity Brandon Deaderick: Potential to begin living up to credentials Charlie Kirschman: Former linebacker has better chance here

Weakside Linebacker

Zeke Knight: Oft-moved, now seems to be at correct position Zach Schreiber: Makes big plays, needs to gain strength Demarcus Waldrop: Undersized, but has experience Cory Reamer: Tough player moving up from safety Travis Sikes: Former grayshirt still developing

Middle Linebacker

Prince Hall: SEC Freshman of the Year on defense in 2006 Charlie Higgenbotham: Had good spring where depth needed Rolando McClain: Freshman likely to make playing rotation

Strongside Linebacker

Darren Mustin: Counted on to start in senior season Marcel Stamps: Senior has seen much action Eryk Anders: Still learning linebacker position

Jack Linebacker

Keith Saunders: Competent, confident and should be playmaker Brandon Fanney: Looked good after surprising switch from DT

Left Cornerback

Simeon Castille: Could be one of best in the nation Marquis Johnson: Showed very good cover skills Tremayne Coger: Should be good player with experience

Right Cornerback

Lionel Mitchell: Great talent who has had to deal with injuries
Eric Gray: Not much difference between one and four at this position
Kareem Jackson: True freshman showed excellent skills in spring
Javier Arenas: Best known as kick returner, but good (though small) back

Safety

Marcus Carter: Made big strides in earning starting job in 2006 Justin Woodall: One of best athletes on the field Chris Rogers: Can be cornerback in nickel and dime packages

Strong Safety

Rashad Johnson: Former walk-on has made the most of abilities Ali Sharrief: Former tailback was outstanding prep defensive player Heart Sam Burnthall: Hard hitter and a very good special teams player linebackers to graduation. Juwan Simpson was the weakside linebacker and Terrence Jones the strongside linebacker in Bama's three-man corps last year. Both ranked among the Tide's top five tacklers statistically.

The only experience at Jack linebacker is that which was earned in the spring. This new position is something of a hybrid spot, outside linebacker and defensive end. A former defensive end, Keith Saunders, and a former defensive tackle, Brandon Fanney, were the two men at the position in the spring and both had their moments. It is reasonable to believe that the staff has plans to shore up depth at Jack linebacker.

Weakside linebacker gets the benefit of a handful of experienced players and the move of some former defensive backs to the position.

Zeke Knight was considered by many to be best as an outside linebacker when coming out of high school. But the very fine athlete was first used at wide receiver (where he also had starred as a prep player). After two years at wide receiver, Knight worked at defensive end last season before health problems ("related to a heart murmur," Saban revealed in the spring) took him out of contact work last fall. This spring he was back and emerged as the leading performer at weakside linebacker.

There is some experience behind Knight. Demarcus Waldrop has had a lot of playing time at outside linebacker spots despite being somewhat undersized. Zach Schreiber came to Alabama with the potential to be either an outside linebacker or defensive end, and has made some nice plays. Schreiber likely would be considered as needing to be stronger and more consistent.

When the Shula staff was loading up on defensive backs and not signing many linebackers, it was explained that some of those defensive backs would "grow" into linebackers.

It's hard to say for sure that Cory Reamer has grown into linebacker size, but he's a tough player who is getting a look at the position. Travis Sikes, another former safety, also worked with the outside linebackers in the spring.

CORNERBACK

It is never a surprise to see an analysis of Alabama's football team begin with cornerback Simeon Castille. The upcoming senior is a returning all-star player who ranked among the nation's best in interceptions and defensive back tackles as a junior. He has been a regular since arriving at Bama and he has the pedigree, the son of a former All-America (Jeremiah) and the brother of former fullback Tim.

What is a surprise is that Simeon has a little history of not doing things exactly right off the field, notably in the area of academics. He claims to have put that indiscretion of youth behind him. Also surprising is where Castille might show up on the field.

Prior to this spring, Castille was primarily a right cornerback. With Ramzee Robinson having graduated, Castille was working at left cornerback in the spring. Additionally, Castille has been very effective in his career as a nickel back. Saban commented on Castille's ability to play nickel—which is more akin to safety than cornerback.

It would not be a surprise to see some juggling of personnel in the secondary, including at cornerback. Eric Gray and Lionel Mitchell have both been regulars at cornerback when Castille was moved from right cornerback to nickel. With Castille having moved to left corner, Gray (formerly listed as a back-up left corner) and Mitchell are battling for the number one job at right cornerback.

Kareem Jackson, a true freshman, entered The University in January and was able to take part in spring drills. He had some impressive moments working at right cornerback. Javier Arenas is best known as a return specialist. Some think he is too small for defense (listed at a generous 5-8, 176), but he makes a lot of plays in practice.

The left cornerback is a critical position because the majority of opposing quarterbacks are right-handed and tend to throw to the side covered by the left corner. With Castille likely to be at nickel on a regular basis, the back-up left cornerback is of great interest.

Marquis Johnson is something of a quiet

player, but seems to have good skills and a knack for being in the right place to make plays. One of the outstanding members of the Alabama scout team last year was redshirt freshman cornerback Tremayne Coger.

SAFETY

As at cornerback, the recruiting efforts of the previous staff resulted in a lot of bodies for the strong safety and safety positions.

The strongside safety can be as much linebacker as defensive back. Last year Bama's leading tackler was graduated strong safety Jeffrey Dukes.

Rashad Johnson was not an experienced strong safety going into last season, but the former walk-on had excelled at every task assigned him as a special teams star as a freshman in 2005, so it was not a surprise that he was a solid performer last year. He earned a few starts when Bama was in nickel and dime (six defensive backs) packages. Johnson is savvy and a sure tackler, two traits that are critical to strong safety play.

Ali Sharrief was a prep linebacker and running back star. He started his Alabama career as a running back, but with tailback crowded Sharrief was moved to strong safety in the spring. Sam Burnthall has had only limited action, but the sophomore seems to have good instincts and the temperament to be effective.

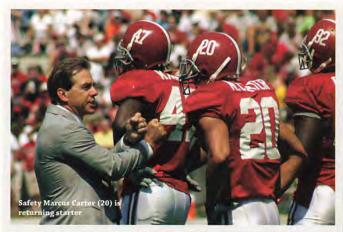
Michael Ricks is a highly-rated junior college transfer who will enter Bama this fall and could be at either safety position.

Decades ago, the safety (also called weakside safety or free safety) was something of a centerfielder of the defense, seeming to roam free, hoping to pick off a pass and counted on to make the tackle as the last line of defense if an offensive ball-carrier got into the secondary. Those are still needs from a safety, but he is much more involved and likely to be much closer to the line than his safety ancestor.

Many an Alabama watcher has considered himself double-surprised by Marcus Carter. The first surprise was that the former prep star took so long to adjust to college football, spinning his wheels for a couple of years. The second surprise was that he emerged last year as a starting safety.

Carter is ahead of Justin Woodall, perhaps primarily because of experience. Woodall would rank among the finest athletes on Alabama's football team, but doesn't have much game experience.

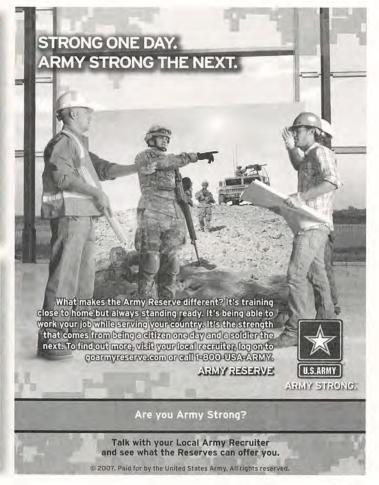
Chris Rogers has been used in nickel and dime situations. Formerly listed as a cornerback, the 5-11 sophomore moved to safety in the spring.



Stuart McNair



Mitch Dobbs



FOOTBALL BY MITCH DOBBS

SPECIAL TEAMS

Improvement Would Get Tide Above Ordinary

o other kicking game moment from last year stood out like three missed kicks at Arkansas in the last four minutes: two field goals and one extra point, each of which could have been the eventual game winner. It is wholly unavoidable in any conversation about Alabama and the kicking game.

For now, the nightmare in Fayetteville overshadows what was otherwise a good year from true freshman placekicker Leigh Tiffin. If he could expunge September 23, 2006 from his record, Tiffin would be 8 of 10 from field goals, including two makes from over 40 yards and a long of 47 that provided the margin of victory over Vanderbilt, and 12 of 12 on extra points.

But that day can't be erased.

The Razorbacks took a 24-23 double overtime win. With the score tied 17-17, Tiffin missed a 30-yard field goal with 3:11 to play, then a 37-yard field goal at the end of the first overtime and an extra point in the second overtime that would have put the Tide up by seven points.

All of the misses sailed wide right.

He did make one that day, on the final play of the first half that gave Alabama a 10-3 lead. Tiffin also missed another 33-yarder in the second quarter. He had been kicking extra points and field goals because the previous year's kicker, Jamie Christensen, suffered a groin injury in pre-season. Christensen, who had three game-winning field goals in Bama's 10-2 season in 2005, returned to action the next week and finished out the year.

In other parts of the kicking game Alabama was mostly below average last year when compared to its conference mates. In the SEC, Bama ranked 5th in net punting (34.5 yards), 9th in kickoff returns (18.2 yards per return), 7th in punt return average (9.1 per return), 6th in field goal percentage (21-30, 70 per cent), 9th in extra points (29-31, 93.5 per cent) and 6th in kickoff coverage. On average Bama's kickoffs went to the four and a half yard line, and were returned to the 21 and a half. Bama had five kickoffs go for touchbacks, the fewest of any Southeastern Conference squad.

Under Nick Saban, who prides himself on being a special teams specialist, and special teams coach Ron Middleton who is qualified with college and NFL experience, there is plenty of room for improvement in all areas of special teams. Here is a position-by-position look at Alabama's special teams:

PLACEKICKING

The good news is, with three college eligibility remaining that Arkansas game will not be the end of Leigh Tiffin's kicking saga. Tiffin had a good spring, making 4 of 5 field goals in scrimmage settings. Tiffin's field goals made were from 46, 31, 28 and 18. His miss, in the second of three spring scrimmages, was from 49 yards out.

Tiffin's shot might not come right away, even though he is a fan favorite thanks to his Crimson lineage. Tiffin's father, Van, was an All-America kicker, lettering in 1983-86. Van Tiffin was 135 of 135 on extra points in his career, and 59 of 88 on field goals with a long of 57, and that famous 52-yarder to give Alabama a 25-23 win

over Auburn in 1985.

First team placekicking duties will likely go to senior Jamie Christensen, who proved himself in game-on-the-line situations in 2005 with three final second, game-winning kicks, against Ole Miss, Tennessee, and Texas Tech in the Cotton Bowl. Christensen is 29 of 42 on field goals in his career, and 42 of 44 on extra points. His long is a 46-yarder, but his leg strength gives him closer to a 60-yard potential range. In spring scrimmages, Christensen was 3-6 with made kicks from 38, 31 and 42, and misses from 43, 45 and 58 yards. He was 3 for 3 on extra points.

Punter P.J. Fitzgerald holds on extra points and field goals, and receiver Will Oakley also worked at that position during the spring.

KICKOFFS

Kickoffs, and kickoff coverage, became more important in the off-season with a rule change that moved the ball back five yards,

SPECIAL TEAMS DEPTH CHART

Placekicker

Jamie Christensen: Wasn't as good last year as he was as soph in 2005 Leigh Tiffin: Remembered for Arkansas miscues, but is pretty good Andrew Friedman: Might be able to win kickoff job

Punter

P.J. Fitzgerald: Needs to show improvement over 2006 Adam Hill: Came to Bama with high expectations Heath Thomas: Waiting on his opportunity Justin Martin: Could be as high as second punter Patrick Eades: Still trying to come back after 2004 car wreck

Return Men

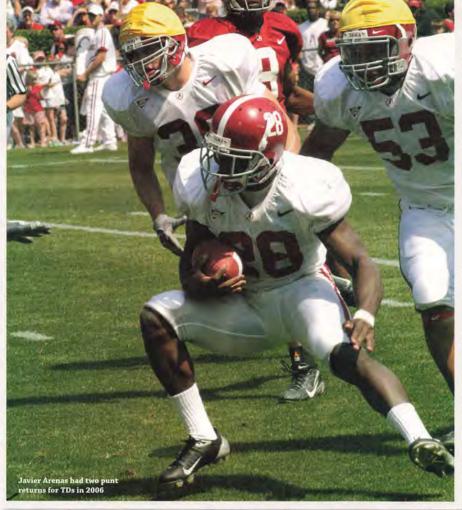
Javier Arenas: Had two punt returns for TDs in 2006 Jonathan Lowe: Looked very good in A-Day Game Terry Grant: Has qualities of a good return man Matt Caddell: Prep record-holder getting a look

Snapper

Brian Selman: Third man in three years for this chore David Ross: High school snapper

Holder

P.J. Fitzgerald: Punter is available to work with kickers in practice Will Oakley: Good hands, worked with kickers in the spring



Benjamin Cohen

from the 35 to the 30 yard line for kickoffs. Not only is getting the ball deep important, but so is having enough hang time to allow the cover men to sprint down the field and make a tackle. The direction of the kick, to avoid an opponent's best returner or hem the return to one sideline, is also a factor in good kickoffs. A kickoff out of bounds will now result in the opponent starting at its 40 yard line, which makes that mistake even more costly.

Christensen also looks like the frontrunner for kickoff duties after handing all kickoffs during the spring game. Of Christensen's nine A-Day kickoffs, four went to the goal line or beyond, and the rest came down at the 3 (twice), 6, 9 and 10 yard lines, respectively. As important, none of his kicks went out of bounds. Last year he had 50 kickoffs that averaged 59.2 yards (around the six yard line), five touchbacks and four that went out of bounds.

Sophomore Andrew Friedman had 11 kickoffs last season for 666 yards, an average of getting the ball to the three and a half yard line. Friedman had one touchback and no kicks out of bounds.

Tiffin had three kickoffs for a 57.7-yard average.

PUNTER

Punting at Alabama has suffered a steady decline in recent years. In 2005, Jeremy Schatz averaged 38.3 yards per punt, and before him in 2003-2004 Bo Freelend averaged 40.7 per punt. Lane Bearden lettered from 1999-2002, and averaged 41.5 yards per punt in his final season (limping out to punt in games even after tearing his ACL). Bearden followed one of Bama's best of all time in Daniel Pope, who averaged 43.5 yards per punt (second in UA history to Greg Gantt who averaged 43.6.) over his career from 1995-98

In 2006 freshman P.J. Fitzgerald took over punting duties averaging 38.2 yards per punt. He has a strong leg, and had a long of 55 yards last year, but lacked consistency. Fitzgerald did all the punting at A-Day and will be the top punter entering the fall, but there will be competition from Adam Hill, Heath Thomas and Justin Martin.

In the spring scrimmages, Fitzgerald had

14 punts for 516 yards, an average of 36.9 per punt. In the first scrimmage he had six punts for a 36.5 yard average. In the second scrimmage it was four punts for 37.5 per punt, and at A-Day he had four punts for an average of 36.5 yards.

RETURNS

In returns, the new rule moving the kickoff back to the 30 yard line has also put more value on being able to set up a quality return.

Javier Arenas is Bama's experienced return man. He was seventh in the league in punt return average, with 9.2 yards per return. Arenas had 31 returns last year for 286 yards and two touchdown punt returns. His 86-yard return in the Independence Bowl equaled the longest of the year by any player in the Southeastern Conference. The man who equaled Arenas' 86-yarder, Georgia's Mikey Henderson, was also the only other player in the SEC to have more than one punt return for touchdown. Both he and Arenas had two.

Arenas was also ninth in the league in kickoff return average, with 19.1 yards per return. He had 18 attempts for a total of 344, and no breakaways in kickoff return. His long of 31 was the lowest of any of the league leaders.

Jonathan Lowe, who transferred to Alabama from Mississippi State and sat out last year due to transfer rules, will give Alabama another great threat in the return game. As a freshman at State, Lowe had only eight punt returns for a 4.8 yard average, and a long of 15. But in practice for Alabama he has looked like a prototypical quick, elusive return man.

Terry Grant has that breakout ability as well, and could get a look returning punts or kicks. Grant was one of Bama's kickoff return men in the first three games before being injured last year, but he never had the ball kicked to him.

Other experienced kick returners are Simeon Castille, Rashad Johnson, Jimmy Johns and D.J. Hall, but they are likely to focus more on their other postions.

LONG SNAPPER

Alabama will have its third snapper in three years, with junior Brian Selman taking over the snapping from Luke Spalding. Selman got his only game action against Florida International last year. Bama's snapping has been relatively solid for the past three seasons.

COVERAGE

Safety Rashad Johnson is Alabama's best cover man, and should be used again on coverage teams in addition to his duties in the defensive secondary. Other Alabama coverage standouts who should be back in that role include Justin Woodall, Marcus Carter, Chris Rogers and Marcel Stamps.

2007 ALABAMA NUMERICAL FOOTBALL ROSTER

No	NAME, POS	CL	HT	WT	EXP	HOMETOWN
2	Simeon Castille, LCB	SR	6-1	189	3L	Birmingham
3	Kareem Jackson, RCB	FR	5-11	185	HS	Macon, Ga.
4	*Tyrone Prothro, FL	SR	5-8	178	3L	Heflin
5	Roy Upchurch, TB	SO	6-0	191	1L	Tallahassee, Fla.
6	Marcel Stamps, WLB	SR	6-2	199	3L	Brantley
6	Wm Vandervoort, QB	SO	6-3	190	SQ	Anniston
7	*Will Oakley, FL	JR	6-1	192	1L	Ponte Vedra Bch, Fla.
7	Adam Hill, P	FR	5-10	188	RS	Douglasville, Ga.
8	Chris Rogers, S	SO	5-11	190	1L	Lakeland, Fla.
9	Nikita Stover, FL	JR	6-0	204	1L	Hartselle
9	Heath Thomas, P	SO	6-3	202	SQ	Montgomery
10	Jimmy Johns, TB	JR	6-2	227	2L	Brookhaven, Miss.
10	Justin Martin, P	SO	5-9	203	SQ	Thomson, Ga.
11	Matt Caddell, FL	SR	5-11	189	3L	McCalla
11	P.J. Fitzgerald, P	SO	5-11	188	1L	Coral Springs, Fla.
13	Cory Reamer, WLB	SO	6-4	210	Sq	Hoover
14	John Parker Wilson, QB	JR	6-2	213	1L	Hoover
15	*Jimmy Barnes, QB	SO	6-5	239	SQ	Los Alamitos, Calif.
15	Andrew Friedman, PK	so	6-1	202	SQ	Fairhope
16	Lionel Mitchell, RCB	JR	6-2	184	1L	Stone Mtn, Ga.
16	James Denton, QB	FR	6-1	205	RS	Charlottesville, Va.
17	Greg McElroy, QB	FR	6-2	216	RS	Southlake, Texas
18		so	5-10	170	1L	Red Bay
19	Leigh Tiffin, PK	JR	6-3	187	SQ	Madison
	Darwin Salaam, WR					Hoover
19	Patrick Eades, P	SR	6-2	185	SQ	3022021
20	Marcus Carter, SS	SR	6-0	200	3L	Fort Payne
20	Jonathan Lowe, WR	SR	5-6	180	SQ	Phenix City
21	Prince Hall, MLB	SO	5-11	255	1L	Moreno Valley, Calif.
22	D.J. Hall, FL	SR	6-3	186	3L	Ft Walton Bch, Fla.
22	Austin Clifford, DB	SO	6-0	187	SQ	Stuart, Fla.
23	Tremayne Coger, CB	FR	5-10	174	RS	Columbia, Tenn.
24	Marquis Johnson, LCB	SO	5-11	178	1L	Sarasota, Fla.
24	Chris Pugh, WR	SO	6-4	185	SQ	Moulton
25	*Aaron McDaniel, WR	JR	6-0	188	SQ	F ort Payne
25	Alex Benson, LB	SO	6-2	215	SQ	Trussville
26	Ali Sharrief, S	SO	5-9	212	1L	Stevenson
26	Hampton Gray, DB	SO	6-2	198	SQ	Tuscaloosa
27	Justin Woodall, S	SO	6-1	213	1L	Oxford, Miss.
28	Javier Arenas, RCB	SO	5-8	176	1L	Tampa, Fla.
29	Terry Grant, TB	FR	5-9	184	RS	Lumberton, Miss.
29	Tyrone King, LCB	JR	5-10	190	SQ	Birmingham
30	Patrick Hanrahan, FB	FR	6-0	245	RS	Springville
30	Rajiv Lundy, DB	so	6-0	195	Tr	Willingboro, N.J.
31	Forress Rayford, DB	SR	6-0	186	SQ	Mobile
32	Eryk Anders, SLB	so	6-2	221	SQ	San Antonio, Texas
34	Courtney Moore, DB	SO	5-10	182	SQ	Florence
35	Charlie Kirschman, DL	FR	6-2	225	RS	St. Augustine, Fla.
36	Eric Gray, RCB	SR	6-2	188	3L	Trinity
37	Trent Dean, S	JR	5-11	188	SQ	Decatur
38	Glen Coffee, TB	so	6-2	225	1L	Ft. Walton Bch, Fla.
38	Joel Nix, LB	so	6-0	230	SQ	Trussville
39		FR	5-10	200	HS	Lakeland, Fla.
39	Jamar Taylor, TB	SO	6-0	225		
	Justin Dunn, LB				SQ	Bessemer Knowdle Tenn
40	Baron Huber, FB	so	6-4	252	1L	Knoxville, Tenn
40	Tucker Callahan, LB	JR	6-2	228	SQ	Fairhope
41	Cliff Murphy, WR	so	6-1	195	SQ	Anniston
43	Sam Burnthall, S	SO	6-2	184	1L	Decatur
44	Demarcus Waldrop, WLB	SR	5-11	200	3L	Pinson
44	Jacob Vane, FB	FR	6-0	235	SQ	Oak Ridge, Tenn.
45	Ch. Higgenbotham, MLB	FR	5-11	225	RS	Birmingham
45	Reyn Willis, SE	so	6-4	212	SQ	Raleigh, N.C.
46	Zach Schreiber, WLB	SO	6-1	211	1L	Shreveport, La.
47	*Zeke Knight, WLB	SR	6-4	230	3L	Wedowee
48	Travis Sikes, LB	FR	6-3	195	RS	Nashville, Tenn.
49	Rashad Johnson, SS	JR	6-0	186	2L	Sulligent
50	Justin Britt, LG	SR	6-4	290	3L	Cullman
50	Cy Ellis, LB	SO	5-11	210	SQ	Killen
51	Andrew Franklin, LB	FR	6-2	226	HS	Trussville
52	Brian Cooper, LB	SO	6-2	198	SQ	Abbott, Texas
53	Joe Robinson, LB	SO	5-11	230	SQ	Birmingham

2007 ALABAMA NUMERICAL FOOTBALL ROSTER

- 0	No NAM	ME, POS	CL	нт	WT	EXP	HOMETOWN
		n Selman, SN	JR	6-0	210	SQ	Vestavia Hills
		Collins, DT	SR	6-1	245	3L	Clay
		en Mustin, SLB	SR	6-3	237	1L	Brentwood, Tenn.
		gan Garner, C	SR	6-2	262	SQ	Deatsville
		bine Caldwell, C	JR FR	6-4 6-0	288	2L RS	Montgomery
		h Ray, LB	SO	6-5	202	SQ	Birmingham
		t Deaton, RG	JR	6-4	281 307	2L	Birmingham Grove Hill
		Stabler, RT Stadler, RG	FR	6-5	318	RS	Bealeton, Va.
		ce Vickers, DL	FR	6-4	250	RS	Athens
		ne Rinks, DT	JR	6-3	300	SQ	Florence
		nua Curry, DT	SR	6-1	314	SQ	Tuscaloosa
		n Motley, DT	FR	6-1	284	RS	Autaugaville
		or Pharr, RG	FR	6-5	265	RS	Irondale
		n Cardwell, C	so	6-2	291	1L	Killen
		re Smith, LT	SO	6-4	348	1L	Birmingham
		is Capps, RT	SR	6-7	283	3L	Jonesboro, Ga.
		id Ross, LG	FR	6-2	307	RS	Homewood
		y Davis, LT	JR	6-6	282	2L	Tuscaloosa
	76 Marl	on Davis, RG	JR	6-2	311	2L	Columbus, Ga.
	77 *Byr	on Walton, DT	SO	6-3	306	SQ	Trinity
	78 Mike	Johnson, RT	SO	6-6	303	1L	Pensacola, Fla.
	79 Drev	w Davis, LT	SO	6-6	268	SQ	Evergreen
	80 Mike	McCoy, WR	SO	6-2	217	1L	Rankin, Miss.
		h Brown, SE	SR	6-3	204	3L	Pensacola, Fla.
		Alexander, WR	FR	6-4	201	RS	Phenix City
	A TOTAL CONTRACTOR	is McCall, TE	JR	6-2	264	2L	Prattville
		Jones, WR	FR	5-11	177	RS	Birmingham
		ston Dial, TE	FR	6-2	240	RS	Mobile
		ie Christensen, PK	SR	6-0	183	3L	Norcross, Ga.
		Walker, TE	JR	6-5	270	2L	Brundidge
		rles Hoke, TE	JR	6-7	251	1L	Birmingham
		on Talbert, LDE	FR	6-2	233	RS	Hattiesburg, Miss.
		oler Gray, DL	JR	6-7	245	SQ	Tuscaloosa
		ace Gilberry, LDE	SR	6-4	264	3L 2L	Bay Minette
		by Greenwood, RDE	JR SR	6-5 6-3	260 248	2L 2L	Prattville
		h Saunders, JLB e Sparks, PK	FR	6-3	200	RS	Willingboro, N.J. Logansville, Ga.
		ndon Deaderick, DT	SO	6-4	271	1L	Elizabethton, Ky.
		iel Wood, TE	so	6-4	247	SQ	McCalla
		enzo Washington, DT	so	6-4	269	1L	Loganville, Ga.
		ndon Fanney, JLB	SO	6-5	253	1L	Morristown, Tenn.
		participation affected	-		-		
	NEWCOMERS IN						11.00 5
	Name	Pos	Hgt	Wgt	40		wn (School)
	Josh Chapman	DT	6-1	300	4.9		am (Hoover)
	Patrick Crump	OL	6-3	280	5.2		am (Hoover)
	Luther Davis	DE	6-4	255	4.8	West Mon	
	Jeremy Elder	DE	6-3	280	4.69		ark, Ga. (North Clayton)
	Nick Fanuzzi	QB	6-3	205	4.6		nio, Texas (Churchill)
	Terence Farmer	DB-WR	5-11	190	4.5		Texas (St. Pius X)
	Nick Gentry	DT	6-3	270	4.78	Prattville	MAC (Maincha)
	Brandon Gibson Demetrius Goode	WR RB	6-2 5-10	190 200	4.55 4.5		MS Wright) e, Ga. (Hargrave Military)
	Jeramie Griffin	FB	6-1	220	4.6		, Miss. (South Panola)
	Darius Hanks	WR	6-1	164	4.46	Norcross,	
	Jennings Hester	LB	6-3	215	4.7		Sa. (Marist)
	Chris Lett	S	6-1	210	4.6	Pensacola	
	Marquis Maze	WR	5-9	163	4.4		am (Tarrant)
	Rolando McClain	LB	6-4	230	4.64	Decatur	in (randin)
	Alfred McCullough		6-3	297	5.1	Athens	
	Kerry Murphy	DT	6-4	300	5.1		am (Hoover)
	Michael Ricks	S	6-2	185	4.44		(NE Mississippi CC)
	Chris Underwood	TE	6-4	225	4.7	Vestavia I	
	William Manhan	OL	6-2	300	5.1	Mountain	Brook
	William Vlachos	OL					
	Alex Watkins	DE	6-4	225	4.6		le, Tenn. (Haywood)

CRIMSON TIDE QUICK FACTS

ALABAMA FOOTBALL COACHING STAFF

Head Coach Nick Saban (Kent State, 1973)

Record as college head coach: 91-42-1, 68.3%

Offensive Coordinator/Quarterbacks

Offensive Line/Assistant Head Coach Offense

Running Backs/Associate Head Coach

Tight Ends/Special Teams

Receivers/Recruiting Coordinator

Defensive Coordinator/Inside Linebackers

Outside Linebackers

Defensive Line

Secondary/Assistant Head Coach Defense

Director of Football Operations

Director of Player Personnel

Assistant Athletics Director for Student Services (Academics)

Director of Player Development

Assistant Director of Player Development

Football Strength & Conditioning

Trainer

Equipment Manager Video Coordinator

Offensive Graduate Assistant

Defensive Graduate Assistant

Offensive Graduate Assistant

Recruiting Graduate Assistant

Video Graduate Assistant

Major Applewhite (Texas, 2002)

Joe Pendry (West Virginia, 1969)

Burton Burns (Nebraska, 1976)

Ron Middleton (Auburn, 1985)

Curt Cignetti (West Virginia, 1982)

Kevin Steele (Tennessee, 1981)

Lance Thompson (The Citadel, 1987)

Bo Davis (LSU, 1993)

Kirby Smart (Georgia, 1998)

Todd Alles (Ohio State, 1976)

Geoff Collins (Western Carolina, 1993)

Jon Dever (Clemson, 1988)

Willie Carl Martin (Northeastern State, 1975)

Jeremy Pruitt (Alabama, 1996)

Scott Cochran (LSU, 2002)

Rodney Brown (Alabama, 1976)

Tank Conerly (Ole Miss, 1980)

Don Rawson (Alabama, 1990)

Gabe Giardina

Louis LeBlanc

Tommy Perry

Jessica Dixon

Greg McLain

UOFA

Location: Tuscaloosa, Alabama

Founded: April 12, 1831

Enrollment: 23,878

President: Dr. Robert E. Witt

Athletics Director: Mal Moore

Faculty Chairman: Dr. Joe Hornsby

Nickname: Crimson Tide

Colors: Crimson and White

Conference: Southeastern (Western Division)

First Year of Football: 1892

Stadium: Bryant-Denny (92,138)

All-Time Football Record: ^788-300-44 (71.7%)

^After NCAA forfeits: 781-308-43 (71.2%)

2006 Record: 6-7

2006 SEC Record: 2-6

Bowl: Independence

(Oklahoma St. 34, Alabama 31)

Final Ranking: N/A

Offense: Multiple

Defense: 3-4 Over/Under

TEAM

Lettermen Returning: 48 (20 Offense, 25 Defense, 3 Specialists)

Lettermen Lost: 16 (5 Offense, 10 Defense, 1 Specialist)

Starters Returning: 16

Offense (9): LT Andre Smith, LG Justin Britt, C Antoine Caldwell, RG Marlon Davis, RT Chris Capps,

TE Travis McCall, QB John Parker Wilson, WR D.J. Hall, WR Keith Brown

Defense (5): DE Bobby Greenwood, DE Wallace Gilberry, MLB Prince Hall, RCB Simeon Castille, S

Marcus Carter

Specialists (2): PK Jamie Christensen, P P.J. Fitzgerald

Other Returning Lettermen

Offense (11): WR Nikita Stover, WR Matt Caddell, WR Will Oakley, TE Nick Walker, TE Charles Hoke,

OL Mike Johnson, C Evan Cardwell, OL B.J. Stabler, OL Cody Davis, TB Jimmy Johns, TB Ali Sharrief

Defense (20): OLB Keith Saunders, OLB Ezekial Knight, OLB Demarcus Waldrop, OLB Marcel Stamps,

OLB Zach Schreiber, OLB Brandon Fanney, DT Lorenzo Washington, DT Matt Collins, DE Brandon

Deaderick, SLB Darren Mustin, CB Simeon Castille, CB Eric Gray, CB Javier Arenas, CB Marquis

Johnson, S Marcus Carter, S Chris Rogers S Justin Woodall, SS Rashad Johnson,, SS Sam Burnthall

Specialists (1): PK Leigh Tiffin

Starters Lost: 8

Offense (2): TB Kenneth Darby, FB LéRon McClain

Defense (6): DT Dominic Lee, DT Jeremy Clark, WLB Juwan Simpson, SLB Terrence Jones, SS Jeffrey

Dukes, LCB Ramzee Robinson

Specialists (1): SN Luke Spaulding

2007 ALABAMA FOOTBALL DEPTH CHART

Not all players are included.

OFFENSE Split End	81 Keith Brown (6-3, 204, Senior) 11 Matt Caddell (5-11, 189, Senior) 80 Mike McCoy (6-2, 217, Sophomore)	DEFENSE Left End	92 Wallace Gilberry (6-4, 264, Senior) 90 Milton Talbert (6-2, 233, Freshman) Luther Davis (6-3, 280, Freshman)
	7 *Will Oakley (6-1, 192, Junior) 39 Darwin Salaam (6-3, 187, Junior) Brandon Gibson (6-1, 190, Freshman) Marquis Maze (5-8, 170, Freshman)	Nose Tackle	Alex Watkins (6-4, 225, Freshman) 66 Brian Motley (6-1, 284, Freshman) 77 Byron Walton (6-3, 306, Sophomore)
Flanker	22 D.J. Hall (6-3, 186, Senior) 9 Nikita Stover (6-0, 204, Junior) 82 Earl Alexander (6-4, 201, Freshman) 84 *Jake Jones (5-11, 177, Freshman) Darius Hanks (6-0, 180, Freshman) 4 *Tyrone Prothro (5-8, 178, Senior)		97 *Lorenzo Washington (6-4, 269, Sophomore) 56 Matt Collins (6-1, 245, Senior) Kerry Murphy (6-5, 315, Freshman) Nick Gentry (6-1, 270, Freshman) Josh Chapman (6-1, 280, Freshman) Jeremy Elder (6-3, 280, Freshman) Alfred McCullough (6-3, 300, Freshman)
Left Tackle	71 Andre Smith (6-4, 335, Sophomore) 75 Cody Davis (6-6, 282, Junior)	Right End	93 Bobby Greenwood (6-5, 260, Junior) 95 Brandon Deaderick (6-4, 271, Sophomore) 35 *Charlie Kirschman (6-2, 225, Freshman)
Left Guard	50 Justin Britt (6-4, 290, Senior) 74 David Ross (6-2, 307, Freshman) Patrick Crump (6-3, 285, Freshman)	Weakside Linebacker	Chavis Williams (6-5, 220, Freshman) 47 *Zeke Knight (6-4, 230, Senior)
Center	59 Antoine Caldwell (6-4, 288, Junior) 70 Evan Cardwell (6-2, 291, Sophomore) 57 Morgan Garner (6-2, 262, Junior) William Vlachos (6-2, 300, Freshman)		46 Zach Schreiber (6-1, 211, Sophomore) 44 *Demarcus Waldrop (5-11, 200, Senior) 13 Cory Reamer (6-4, 210 Sophomore) 48 Travis Sikes (6-3, 195, Freshman)
Right Guard	76 Marlon Davis (6-2, 311, Junior) 68 Taylor Pharr (6-5, 265, Freshman) 62 Alex Stadler (6-5, 318, Freshman) 60 Scott Deaton (6-5, 281, Sophomore)	Middle Linebacker	21 Prince Hall (5-11, 255, Sophomore) 45 Charlie Higgenbotham (5-11, 225, Freshman) Rolando McClain (6-4, 245, Freshman)
Right Tackle	61 *B.J. Stabler (6-4, 295, Junior) 78 Mike Johnson (6-6, 303, Sophomore) 72 *Chris Capps (6-7, 283, Senior)	Strongside Linebacker	57 Darren Mustin (6-3, 237, Senior) 6 Marcel Stamps (6-2, 199, Senior) 32 Eryk Anders (6-2, 221, Sophomore) Jennings Hester (6-3, 230, Freshman)
Tight End	79 Drew Davis (6-6, 268, Sophomore) 83 *Travis McCall (6-2, 264, Junior)	Jack Linebacker	94 Keith Saunders (6-3, 248, Senior) 98 Brandon Fanney (6-5, 253, Sophomore)
	88 Nick Walker (6-5, 270, Junior) 85 Preston Dial (6-2, 240, Freshman) 89 Charles Hoke (6-7, 251, Junior) Chris Underwood (6-4, 215, Freshman)	Left Cornerback	2 Simeon Castille (6-1, 189, Senior) 24 Marquis Johnson (5-11, 178, Sophomore) 23 Tremayne Coger (5-10, 174, Freshman) 29 Tyrone King (5-10, 190, Sophomore) Tarence Farmer (5-11, 190, Freshman)
Quarterback	14 John Parker Wilson (6-2, 209, Junior) 17 Greg McElroy (6-2, 216, Freshman) 15 *Jimmy Barnes (6-5, 239, Sophomore) Nick Fanuzzi (6-3, 205, Freshman)	Right Cornerback	16 Lionel Mitchell (6-2, 184, Junior) 36 *Eric Gray (6-2, 188, Senior) 3 Kareem Jackson (5-11, 185, Freshman) 28 Javier Arenas (5-8, 176, Sophomore)
Tailback	29 Terry Grant (5-9, 184, Freshman) 38 Glen Coffee (6-1, 225, Sophomore) 10 Jimmy Johns (6-2, 227, Junior) 5 Roy Upchurch (6-0, 191, Sophomore) 25 Jamar Taylor (5-10, 205, Freshman) Demetrius Goode (5-10, 200, Freshman)	Safety	20 Marcus Carter (6-0, 200, Senior) 27 Justin Woodall (6-1, 213 Sophomore) 8 Chris Rogers (5-11, 190, Sophomore) Chris Lett (6-1, 205, Freshman)
Fullback	40 Baron Huber (6-4, 252, Sophomore) 30 Patrick Hanrahan (6-0, 245, Freshman) Jeramie Griffin (6-0, 225, Freshman)	Strong Safety	49 Rashad Johnson (6-0, 186, Junior) 26 Ali Sharrief (5-9, 212, Sophomore) 43 Sam Burnthall (6-2, 184, Sophomore) Michael Ricks (6-2, 185, Junior)
Placekicker	86 Jamie Christensen (6-0, 183, Senior) 18 Leigh Tiffin (5-10, 170, Sophomore) 15 Andrew Friedman (6-1, 202, Sophomore)	Punter	11 P.J. Fitzgerald (5-11, 189, Sophomore) 7 Adam Hill (5-10, 188, Freshman) 9 Heath Thomas (6-3, 202, Freshman) 10 Justin Martin (5-9, 203, Freshman)
Snapper	54 Brian Selman (6-0, 210, Sophomore)	Returning starters in Bol	19 Patrick Eades (6-2, 185, Senior)

Returning starters in Bold *Injured and limited in spring practice

THE 2007 CRIMSON TIDE

FOOTBALL BY ERIK STINNETT



82 Earl Alexander
Freshman • Wide
Receiver • 6-4, 201
Phenix City • Central
An athletic, playmaking quarterback
in high school, Earl
Alexander is expected
to be an offensive

weapon at Alabama-but from the wide receiver position. The only question is: How soon? After redshirting last year, Alexander is expected to start this season as the No. 3 flanker, working behind upperclassmen DJ Hall and Nikita Stover, but few will be surprised if he sees significant playing time this season. Alexander caught three passes for 45 yards in the A-Day Game.



32 Eryk Anders

Sophomore •
Linebacker • 6-2, 221
San Antonio, Texas •
Smithson Valley
Eryk Anders is
expected to start
fall camp as the
back-up to Darren

Mustin at strongside linebacker. Anders turned in a solid A-Day performance, combining with fellow reserves Charlie Higginbotham, Brandon Fanney and Zach Schreiber to register 20 tackles and three sacks. Anders recorded four tackles

last year as he saw action in eight games, primarily on special teams.



28 Javier Arenas
Sophomore •
Cornerback • 5-8, 176
Tampa, Fla. •
Robinson
As a true freshman

As a true freshman last season, special teams dynamo Javier Arenas launched what

promises to be a stellar career. He was the Tide's top kick and punt returner in '06, returning 18 kicks for 344 yards (19.1 average) and 31 punts for 286 yards (9.2 average). What most Alabama fans remember about Arenas are the two punts he returned for touchdowns, the first coming against Florida International and the second coming against Oklahoma State. The score against the Cowboys covered 86 yards, setting both an Alabama bowl record as well as an Independence Bowl record. Of course, before you can think about finding the end zone, you first must be able to catch the ball, and Arenas has shown he's as steady as they come in that department. The fearless Floridian rarely called for a fair catch in '06, resulting in numerous free shots by opposing gunners, and still he muffed only one punt. Even then, he recovered his fumble. Arenas could provide help in the secondary, too, serving as a possible back-up to Lionel Mitchell at right cornerback.



15 Jimmy Barnes

Sophomore • Quarterback • 6-5, 239 Los Alamitos, Calif. • Los Alamitos

Jimmy Barnes enters fall camp in a close competition with Greg McElroy

for the Tide's back-up quarterback job. The sophomore ended the regular season as the No. 2 guy behind John Parker Wilson, but a torn ACL followed by subsequent surgery on December 19 shelved Barnes during the spring, opening the door for McElroy. Barnes' most significant action last fall came against Florida International when he completed 6-of-11 passes for 45 yards and threw his first career touchdown pass.



50 Justin Britt

Senior • Offensive Guard • 6-4, 290 Cullman • Cullman Justin Britt, who played his first two seasons at Alabama on the defensive line, will apparently end

his Bama career as an offensive linemen, as were his older brothers-Wesley and Taylor. Britt is the Tide's returning starter at left guard where he recorded 55 knockdown blocks during the '06 regular season. Also known for

his toughness and durability, Britt was one of only nine players to play over 700 snaps for Alabama last year.



81 Keith Brown
Senior • Wide
Receiver • 6-3, 204
Pensacola, Fla. •
Pensacola
When healthy, Keith
Brown, a returning
starter at wide out for
the Tide, has proven

he's a legitimate All-SEC caliber receiver with big-play capability every time he touches the ball. The problem has been staying healthy. Brown opened last season with a statementmaking six-catch, 132-yard, one-touchdown performance against Hawaii, and he continued what looked like was gearing up to be breakout year until a knee injury midway through the season set him back. Despite being slowed the second half of the season, he still finished '06 as the Tide's second-leading receiver with 44 catches for 590 yards and three touchdowns. Brown was hampered by injuries as a sophomore and freshman, too. In '05, he had 34 catches for 642 yards and four touchdowns, and in '04 he had 17 catches for 295 yards and one touchdown.



43 Sam Burnthall
Sophomore • Strong
Safety • 6-2, 184
Decatur • Decatur
A former grayshirt,
Sam Burnthall saw
action in 11 games last
season as a freshman,
participating in 147

snaps and logging nine tackles. The majority of his playing time came on special teams. In this year's A-Day Game, he had one solo tackle and two assists. He's expected to provide depth at the strong safety position this fall.



11 Matt Caddell
Senior • Wide
Receiver • 5-11, 189
McCalla • McAdory
Maybe reserve wide
out Matt Caddell is
coming back around.
After a promising
freshman campaign,

Caddell turned in a mostly quiet sophomore season and appeared headed for another unspectacular season as a junior. But late in the year, Caddell started showing occasional flashes of becoming more of an impact player, highlighted by a strong showing in the Independence Bowl where he made three catches for 33 yards, including a season-long 18-yard touchdown catch. He also caught a touchdown pass in his side's 20-13 loss in this year's A-Day Game.



59 Antoine

Caldwell

Junior • Center • 6-4,

288

Montgomery • Lee

Antoine Caldwell,
the Tide's returning
starter at center,
enters the '07 season

as one of the Tide's leaders and top performers on the offensive line. After starting at guard in '05 and earning Freshman All-SEC honors, Caldwell switched to center for the '06 Cotton Bowl and remained there for the '06 season. He proved to be an all-star at his new position, too, registering 58 knockdown blocks en route to earning second team All-SEC honors. Caldwell, a legitimate All-SEC candidate this season, has now started 25 consecutive games. Last year he played tackle in some two-minute situations. This past spring, Caldwell received the Dwight Stephenson Award as the A-Day Game's most valuable lineman and was also a co-recipient, along with Simeon Castille, of the Mal Moore Leadership Award.



72 Chris Capps
Senior • Offensive
Tackle • 6-7, 283
Jonesboro, Ga. •
Landmark Christian
Perhaps the most
maligned of Alabama's
offensive linemen,
Chris Capps is the

Tide's returning starter at right tackle. Last year, he registered 40 knockdown blocks, but inconsistent play over the past two seasons, coupled with missing contact work in the spring because of injury, may make it difficult for the Georgia native to hold onto his starting job in '07. Capps started at left tackle in '05.



70 Evan Cardwell
Sophomore • Center •
6-2, 291
Killen • Brooks
Evan Cardwell enters
fall camp as the
Tide's second-team
center, but he does
have significant game

experience. He served as the Tide's center in the two-minute offense the last half of last season and finished the year having participated in 147 snaps in 13 games. He had eight knockdown blocks.



20 Marcus Carter
Senior • Safety • 6-0,
200
Fort Payne • Fort
Payne
Marcus Carter enters
fall camp as a potential
starter at safety. He
started the first seven

games of '06 and then the final two games, finishing with 30 tackles with 17 solo stops and 13 assisted tackles. His best game came in the season-opener against Hawaii when he forced a fumble and recorded a career-high six

tackles. Inconsistency eventually cost Carter a few starts in the last half of the season.



2 Simeon Castille
Senior • Cornerback •
6-1, 189
Birmingham •
Briarwood Christian
The Tide's top
defensive playmaker
and one of the top allaround athletes on

the team, All-SEC cornerback Simeon Castille is expected to have a big senior season. Last year, the ball-hawking standout led Alabama with six interceptions and three fumble recoveries. He finished fourth on the team with 71 tackles, including 44 solo stops to go along with 4.5 tackles for loss, one sack, one caused fumble, six pass breakups and three quarterback pressures. He also saw some duty as a punt returner. The off-season arrival of Coach Nick Saban, an expert in coaching defensive backs, is expected to pay huge dividends in the continued development of Castille. In the spring, along with Antoine Caldwell, he was recipient of the Mal Moore Leadership Award.



86 Jamie
Christensen
Senior • Kicker • 6-0,
183
Norcross, Ga. •
Norcross
After gaining national
recognition in '05 with
his late-game heroics,

Jamie Christensen lost a little luster in '06. A groin injury, which hampered him early in the season, was part of the problem, and the other factor was the simple fact that the man known as "Money" didn't find himself in the position to kick clutch, game-winning field goals like he did in '05. For Christensen to keep his job as a senior, he'll likely need to improve

his accuracy on long field goal attempts after hitting on just 1-of-4 attempts last year from 40 yards or more. All in all in '06, he was good on 13-of-17 field goal attempts and 17-of-18 extra-point attempts. Of his 50 kickoffs, four resulted in touchbacks. In the A-Day Game, with kickoffs moved back five yards to the 30, Christensen showed good hang time and good leg strength, dropping six of his nine kicks inside the 5-yard line, including two that went into the end zone. He was 2-of-3 on field goal attempts in the spring game, hitting from 47 and 41 yards and missing from 43.



38 Glen Coffee
Sophomore • Running
Back • 6-2, 225
Fort Walton Beach,
Fla. • Fort Walton
Beach
Glen Coffee appeared
to be the beneficiary
of Jimmy Johns'

early spring academic troubles, vaulting to the top of the depth chart, but by the time A-Day rolled around, Coffee found himself suiting up with the second-team offense, while Johns and Terry Grant wore the first-team jerseys. In that spring game, Coffee carried four times for 15 yards. Regardless of where he begins fall camp, whether its first-, second- or third-string, Coffee is expected to be in the mix at running back this fall. Two seasons ago, Coffee saw action in every game and finished as the Tide's third-leading rusher with 179 yards to go along with 91 receiving yards and a touchdown. He missed the '06 season because of injury.



Freshman •
Cornerback • 5-10,
174
Columbia, Tenn. •
Central
Redshirt freshman
Tremayne Coger is
expected to provide

depth at cornerback, likely starting fall camp behind Simeon Castille and Marquis Johnson on the left side. In the A-Day Game, Coger tallied one solo tackle and two assisted tackles.



56 Matt Collins
Senior • Defensive
Tackle • 6-1, 245
Clay • Clay-Chalkville
Someday Matt Collins
will be able to tell
his grandkids that
he sacked the NFL's
2007 No. 1 draft pick,

former LSU quarterback JaMarcus Russell. As far as the here and now, Collins is just trying to settle into his new role as a reserve nose tackle. A bit undersized for his new spot on the defensive line, Collins, a former linebacker, made the move because of a lack of depth on the defensive line. The Clay native actually started at middle linebacker early in '06 but eventually gave way to budding star Prince Hall. Collins finished the season with 11 tackles, including seven solo stops, 1.5 tackles for loss, one quarterback hurry and, of course, the sack of Russell.



75 Cody Davis
Junior • Offensive
Tackle • 6-6, 282
Tuscaloosa • Hillcrest
Cody Davis enters fall
camp as the Tide's No.
2 left tackle behind
entrenched starter

Andre Smith. As a back-up last year, Davis participated in 44 snaps in five games. He got in for 151 plays as a freshman reserve.



79 Drew Davis
Sophomore •
Offensive Tackle •
6-6, 268
Evergreen • Sparta
Academy
Drew Davis, a reserve
offensive lineman,
saw action in one

game last season-against Louisiana Monroe. He was involved in six snaps and recorded one knockdown block. He'll likely start fall camp behind B.J. Stabler, Mike Johnson and Chris Capps at right tackle. Davis was a grayshirt in 2004 and redshirted in 2005.



76 Marlon Davis
Junior • Offensive
Guard • 6-2, 311
Columbus, Ga. •
Carver
Marlon Davis enters
fall camp as the team's
starting right guard.
The Georgia native

came on strong near the end of last season, playing more than 50 snaps in each of the final five games and earning starts in three of the Tide's final four games. He finished the season with 34 knockdown blocks. As a freshman he had one start and was a regular back-up.



95 Brandon
Deaderick
Sophomore •
Defensive End • 6-4,
271
Elizabethtown, Ky. •
Elizabethtown
Brandon Deaderick
is expected to push

for playing time on the defensive front this fall. He played in seven games last season, including the final five contests, and finished with two tackles-one against Mississippi State and one against LSU. He had three assisted tackles in this year's A-Day Game.



60 Scott Deaton
Sophomore •
Offensive Lineman •
6-5, 281
Birmingham • Oak
Mountain
Scott Deaton will
be counted on to
provide depth on the

offensive line this fall, likely at the right guard spot. The Birmingham native redshirted in '05 and saw minimal action in '06. He's one of several Bama players who are sons of former Tiders. His father, Ken, was also an offensive lineman at Alabama.



85 Preston Dial
Freshman • Tight
End • 6-2, 240
Mobile • UMS-Wright
After redshirting last
season, tight end
Preston Dial turned
in a solid spring
and is expected to

provide depth at the position this fall. He had two catches for 33 yards in this year's A-Day Game, including a 25-yard reception from John Parker Wilson. There have been hints of Alabama employing an H-back (hybrid tight end-fullback-receiver) and of Dial being the leading candidate for that position.



98 Brandon Fanney
Sophomore •
Linebacker • 6-5, 253
Morristown, Tenn. •
Morristown-West
Brandon Fanney, who
got in on one play last
season as a redshirt
freshman defensive

lineman, made the move to linebacker in the spring and fared quite well at his new home. He, along with fellow reserves Charlie Higginbotham, Eryk Anders and Zach Schreiber, combined to record 20 tackles and three sacks in the A-Day Game. Fanney will likely begin fall camp as Keith Saunders' backup at the "Jack" linebacker position.



11 P.J. Fitzgerald
Sophomore • Punter •
5-11, 188
Coral Springs, Fla. •
Marjory Stoneman
Douglas
P.J. Fitzgerald returns
as Alabama's No. 1
punter this season

after stepping into that role as a redshirt freshman last season. In '06, he recorded 57 punts, averaging 38.2 yards per punt with a long of 55 yards against Hawaii in the season-opener. He had 19 punts downed inside the 20. A 53-yard punt in the A-Day Game may be a sign that Fitzgerald will be booming long punts on a more consistent basis in '07.



15 Andrew
Friedman
Sophomore • Kicker •
6-1, 202
Fairhope • UMSWright
Andrew Friedman
handled kickoff
duties early last

season while Jamie Christensen was injured.

Of Friedman's 11 kicks, one resulted in a touchback. Friedman likely enters fall camp behind both Christensen and Leigh Tiffin on the depth chart.



92 Wallace Gilberry
Senior • Defensive
End • 6-4, 264
Bay Minette •
Baldwin County
A two-year starter at
defensive end with
three years of playing
experience, Wallace

Gilberry is expected to not only retain his starting job but also be one of the senior leaders on a young defense. Gilberry began his career in 2004 looking like a future All-America, totaling 13 tackles for loss, 6.5 sacks, two forced fumbles and seven quarterback pressures as a freshman, but his sack totals and tackles for loss have dipped since then, due at least in some part to the double teams he's attracted. Still, Gilberry was one of Alabama's most productive defensive linemen last year, recording 43 tackles, 10 tackles for loss, 3.5 sacks, one forced fumble and one pass breakup.



29 Terry Grant
Freshman • Running
Back • 5-9, 184
Clay • Lumberton
Alabama fans got a
little Terry tease last
season and are no
doubt anxious to see
more of the speedy

Grant this season. And they should. Grant suited up with the first-team offense in the spring A-Day Game and then validated that placement by rushing for a game-high 47 yards and sporting a team-best 5.9 yards-per-carry average. For good measure, he also had five catches for 29 yards. Grant first turned heads with a long touchdown run in a preseason

scrimmage in '06 and then broke off a 19-yard run against Louisiana-Monroe in game three. A shoulder injury shelved Grant for the remainder of the season, but, after a strong spring showing, the Clay native finds himself as a serious contender for the starting job this fall. He was the co-recipient, along with Kareem Jackson, of the Ozzie Newsome Most Improved Freshman Award.



36 Eric Gray

Senior • Cornerback •
6-2, 188

Trinity • West

Morgan

Eric Gray is expected
to contend for a
starting spot at
corner this fall with

Lionel Mitchell likely his top competition. Unfortunately for Gray, he probably lost a little ground to Mitchell in the spring after aggravating a hamstring injury. Gray saw action in all 13 games last season-twice drawing starts when Bama opened in the nickel scheme-and finished with 17 tackles and two pass breakups.



93 Bobby
Greenwood
Junior • Defensive
End • 6-5, 260
Prattville • Prattville
After making a big
splash in '05 en route
to earning First-Team
Freshman All-SEC

honors, Bobby Greenwood plateaued a bit last season. He totaled 27 tackles, five tackles for loss, 2.5 sacks, one forced fumble and three quarterback pressures. Although his stats his first two seasons were relatively equal, he saw nearly double the action last season. In the spring, Greenwood was the co-recipient, along with Travis McCall, of the Sylvester Croom Commitment to Excellence Award, which

bodes well for a possible return to all-star status this fall. Greenwood enters fall camp as the projected starter at defensive end.



22 DJ Hall
Senior • Wide
Receiver • 6-3, 186
Fort Walton
Beach, Fla. •
Choctawhatchee
He still has his
senior season to play
and already record-

breaking pass-catcher DJ Hall has stamped himself as one of Alabama's all-time best receivers. In '05, he became the first player in Alabama history to catch at least 10 passes in consecutive games (Tennessee and Utah State). Last season, Hall was the Tide's top receiver for the second year in a row, finishing with 62 catches for a school record 1,056 yards and five touchdowns. Along the way, he recorded seven 100-yard receiving games, including a school record five in a row, to give him 10 for his career, another school record. The second-team All-SEC performer continued to impress in the spring, snagging five passes for 87 yards and a touchdown in the A-Day Game to earn his second straight Dixie Howell Memorial Award, given to the game's MVP. He also earned the Ray Perkins Receiver Award.



21 Prince Hall
Sophomore •
Linebacker • 5-11,
255
Moreno Valley, Calif.

Moreno Valley

He is not be related to DJ Hall, but Prince Hall is beginning to

make a name for himself on the defense the way DJ has done on offense. After starting the '06 season as a back-up, Hall wasted little time working his way into a starting role as a

redshirt freshman, finishing the season with nine starts at middle linebacker. He led the team with 10.5 tackles for loss to go along with two sacks, two pass breakups and two fumble recoveries. His 77 total tackles on the season was third highest on the team. His '06 accolades included being named Freshman All-SEC, Freshman All-America and SEC Freshman of the Year by The Sporting News. He added the Woodrow Lowe Linebacker Award in the spring.



45 Charlie
Higgenbotham
Freshman •
Linebacker • 5-11,
225
Mountain Brook •
Mountain Brook
After redshirting as
a freshman last fall,

Charlie Higgenbotham had a good spring showing and will likely serve as Prince Hall's back-up at middle linebacker this fall. In the A-Day Game, the former Mountain Brook star tallied two solo tackles and five assisted tackles.



7 Adam Hill
Freshman • Punter •
5-10, 188
Douglasville, Ga. •
Chapel Hill
Adam Hill is expected
to serve as Alabama's
No. 2 punter this fall,
backing up returning

starter P.J. Fitzgerald. Hill was redshirted last season.



89 Charles Hoke
Junior • Tight End •
6-7, 251
Birmingham •
Briarwood Christian
Charles Hoke, who
has the tools to
become an impact
tight end with his

size, speed and wide receiver hands, enters fall camp likely behind the more experienced duo of Travis McCall and Nick Walker and maybe even freshman Preston Dial on the depth chart. Hoke saw action on 130 snaps last season.



40 Baron HuberSophomore • Fullback
• 6-4, 252
Knoxville, Tenn. •
Central
Baron Huber appears
to be the heir apparent

at fullback now that

LéRon McClain and

Tim Castille have taken their skills to the NFL. While playing behind the two veteran stars didn't afford Huber much playing time last season, he did see a little (mostly on special teams), participating in 54 snaps in nine games. An ankle injury sidelined him for the final four games of the year. In the spring, Huber shared the Derrick Thomas Community Service Award with Byron Walton.



3 Kareem Jackson
Freshman •
Cornerback • 5-11,
185
Macon, Ga. • Westside
Kareem Jackson
was one of two 2007
signees-running back
Jamar Taylor being

the other-to enroll at Alabama in January, allowing him to participate in spring practice.

Jackson, though, didn't just participate. He raised some eyebrows. He shared the Ozzie Newsome Most Improved Freshman Award with Terry Grant and is expected to push for playing time this fall. In '06, Jackson played for Fork Union Military Academy and recorded five interceptions.



10 Jimmy Johns
Junior • Running
Back • 6-2, 227
Brookhaven, Miss. •
Brookhaven
The most experienced
of Alabama's stable of
running backs and one
of the most talented,

Jimmy Johns would seem to be the likely replacement for Ken Darby as the Tide's No. 1 running back. Academic trouble in the spring put Johns in not-so-satisfactory standing with Coach Nick Saban. Johns eventually found his way back on to the field and even earned the Jerry Duncan "I Like To Practice" Award. Assuming Johns stays in Saban's good graces, the Mississippi product seems likely to at least be a co-starter, especially considering Saban has been known in the past to utilize more than one running back and considering the fact that it was Johns and Terry Grant who were the two ballcarriers suited up with the first-team offense in the A-Day Game. Johns, finished second on the team in rushing for the second-straight season last fall. He totaled 293 yards and one touchdown on 66 carries last year-good enough for a 4.4 yards per carry average. In the A-Day Game, Johns rushed six times for 26 yards.



Johnson
Sophomore •
Cornerback • 5-11,
178
Sarasota, Fla. • Booker
Marquis Johnson is
expected to fight for

24 Marquis

playing time this fall, but with seniors Simeon Castille and Eric Gray expected to play key roles this fall, Johnson may be a year away from settling into a starting role. Last year, Johnson played a total of 183 snaps and collected seven tackles. He turned in a solid A-Day performance, registering one solo tackle, six assists and nearly making an interception.



78 Mike Johnson
Sophomore •
Offensive Tackle • 6-6,
303
Pensacola, Fla. • Pine
Forest
Injuries to Chris Capps
and B.J. Stabler opened
the door for Mike

Johnson to make some noise in the spring, and that's certainly what he did. Johnson was the co-recipient, along with Brian Motley, of the Bart Starr Most Improved Player Award, and he earned the opportunity to trot out with the No. 1 unit for the A-Day Game. Keeping the two upperclassmen, particularly Stabler, from reclaiming the starting job will be difficult to do once fall camp commences. Last season, Johnson got in on 132 snaps and recorded four knockdown blocks.



49 Rashad Johnson
Junior • Strong Safety
• 6-0, 186
Sulligent • Sulligent
The projected
starter at strong
safety this season,
Rashad Johnson won
the Bobby Johns

Defensive Back Award and was singled out by teammates as being one of the new leaders of the secondary. Last season, Johnson started four games, saw action in 11, and finished with 33 tackles, including 22 solo stops, 1.5 tackles for loss and two forced fumbles. He also returned four kickoffs for 68

yards. He missed the final two games of the regular season because of an ankle injury but returned to post a career-high seven tackles in the Independence Bowl.



84 Jake Jones
Freshman • Wide
Receiver • 5-11, 177
Birmingham •
Mountain Brook
The son of former
Alabama star receiver
Joey Jones, Jake
Jones may have to

wait a little bit before he gets the chance to become an impact player like his dad was. Jones redshirted last season and then was limited in the spring because of injury. With the Tide loaded with seasoned, stand-out receivers, Jones is expected to play a reserve role this fall.



Kirschman
Freshman • Defensive
End • 6-2, 225
St. Augustine, Fla. •
Nease
Charlie Kirschman,
who redshirted last

fall and then was

35 Charlie

slowed by injury in the spring, will be counted on for depth this season on the defensive line. He'll likely back up Bobby Greenwood and Brandon Deaderick at right end.



47 Zeke Knight
Senior • Linebacker •
6-4, 230
Wendowee •
Randolph County
Zeke Knight made
his second position
move in as many
springs, switching

from defensive end to outside linebacker. Due to injury, Knight didn't spend lots of time at defensive end last fall. In four games of action, he registered four tackles, one tackle for loss and one forced fumble. Knight was cleared to play in the spring and made enough of an impression on the new coaching staff to earn the Lee Roy Jordan Headhunter Award. The athletically gifted senior, who played linebacker in high school, will likely start at one of the outside linebacker spots this fall. Knight played his first two seasons at Alabama as a wide receiver.



20 Jonathan Lowe
Senior • Wide
Receiver • 5-6, 180
Phenix City • Central
If Alabama fans
hadn't heard of
Jonathan Lowe
prior to the A-Day
Game, they certainly

knew who he was after the A-Day Game. The transfer from Mississippi State, who had to sit out the '06 season, turned heads with some nifty moves and a burst of speed in returning kicks. Although quick whistles made it hard to calculate for sure how far Lowe would have returned the kicks, he was given credit, at least, for totaling 143 yards on five returns. His best return went for 45 yards before the play was blown dead. Lowe, the son of former Alabama player Eddie Lowe, could provide depth at receiver.



83 Travis McCall
Junior • Tight End •
6-2, 264
Prattville • Prattville
Travis McCall,
known mostly for his
blocking skills, enters
fall camp as the Tide's
likely No. 1 tight end.

The Prattville native started 12 of 13 games

last season, finishing with eight catches for 105 yards and one touchdown. A good spring showing made him the co-recipient, along with Bobby Greenwood, of the Sylvester Croom Commitment to Excellence Award.



80 Mike McCoy
Sophomore • Wide
Receiver • 6-2, 217
Rankin, Miss. •
Northwest Rankin
Bestknownforgetting
bit last season by
Smokey, Tennessee's
mascot hound, wide

receiver Mike McCoy hopes to provide college football fans some on-the-field highlights this season with which to remember him. But with seniors DJ Hall, Keith Brown and Matt Caddell still suiting up for the Tide, McCoy's real time in the spotlight may be a season away. McCoy basically lost a year of eligibility last year, seeing the field for just eight snaps and catching no passes. He had three catches for 29 yards in the A-Day Game.



17 Greg McElroy
Freshman •
Quarterback • 6-2,
216
Southlake, Texas •
Carroll
Greg McElroy enters
fall camp in what
could be a tight

battle with Jimmy Barnes for the back-up quarterback job. McElroy redshirted last fall and then made the most of his opportunity in the spring with Barnes out with a knee injury. In directing the second-team offense in the A-Day Game, McElroy was 14-of-33 for 139 yards and a touchdown. As a high school senior he was the Texas 5A (largest classification) offensive player of the year.



25 Aaron McDaniel
Junior • Wide
Receiver • 6-0, 188
Fort Payne • Fort
Payne
Aaron McDaniel,
whose transition
from defensive back
to wideout has been

slowed by a knee injury, figures to provide depth at the wide receiver position this fall. McDaniel suffered his season-ending knee injury in practice following last year's Arkansas game and was held out of contact work in the spring. He played four snaps in '06 before going down.



16 Lionel Mitchell
Junior • Cornerback •
6-2, 184
Stone Mountain, Ga.
• Stephenson
Entering fall camp,
Lionel Mitchell finds
himself in a battle
with Eric Gray for one

of the starting cornerback spots. An injury to Gray last spring may have given Mitchell a slight edge in the competition. Last season, Mitchell saw action in 11 games, starting three, and turned in an impressive four interceptions. He also tallied 25 tackles and had one pass breakup. He's the son of former NFL player Stump Mitchell.



66 Brian Motley
Freshman • Defensive
Tackle • 6-1, 284
Autaugaville •
Autaugaville
So much for needing
time to adjust. Brian
Motley became one of
the top newsmakers

of the spring when he made the switch from

offensive line to defensive line and earned a starting job at nose tackle. Then again, it's not like the redshirt freshman finds himself in unfamiliar territory. Motley starred both ways in high school, recording 145 tackles, six sacks and 16 tackles for loss as a senior in '05.



57 Darren Mustin
Senior • Linebacker •
6-3, 237
Brentwood, Tenn. •
Brentwood Academy
Darren Mustin
appears to be on
course for what's
shaping up to be a

storybook ending to his collegiate career. After playing his first two seasons at Middle Tennessee, Mustin transferred to Alabama, redshirted in '05 and saw limited action in '06, participating in 73 snaps and totaling eight tackles. But a strong spring showing, punctuated by receiving the Paul "Bear" Bryant Outstanding Non-scholarship Player Award, has thrust Darren Mustin into a starting role at one of the inside linebacker positions.



7 Will Oakley
Junior • Wide
Receiver • 6-1, 192
Ponte Vedra Beach,
Fla. • Nease
Will Oakley finally got
over the hamstring
problems that plagued
him his first two

seasons at Alabama. Unfortunately, an injured shoulder kept him out of contact drills in the spring. When healthy, however, as Oakley was for the '06 season, the Floridian has proven himself to be a clutch, sure-handed pass-catcher. He played in all 13 games last year, seeing an increase in starts and playing time when Keith Brown went down to injury. Oakley finished the season with 18 catches for 223 yards.



68 Taylor Pharr
Freshman • Offensive
Guard • 6-5, 265
Irondale • Shades
Valley
Taylor Pharr, who
redshirted in '06,
goes into fall camp as
the likely back-up to

Marlon Davis at right guard. Pharr was one of the standouts early on in spring drills. In the spring, coaches briefly experimented with him on defense before switching him back.



74 David Ross
Freshman • Offensive
Guard • 6-2, 307
Homewood •
Homewood
A probable starter on
Alabama's offensive
line in '08, David Ross
is expected to back

up senior left guard Justin Britt this season. Ross, who redshirted last season, was one of several highly touted offensive linemen who signed with the Tide in '06. He is capable of playing either right or left guard.



13 Cory Reamer
Junior • Linebacker •
6-4, 210
Hoover • Hoover
Cory Reamer made
the move from safety
to linebacker in the
spring. Maybe the
switch will change

his injury luck, too. The former Hoover star missed the majority of the past two seasons because of injury, but if he can stay healthy in '06, he should provide quality depth at the position.



19 Darwin Salaam
Junior • Wide
Receiver • 6-3, 187
Madison • Sparkman
Darwin Salaam
played two snaps as
a sophomore last
season and, with a
solid corps of proven

veterans already in place, is again expected to see only limited action this fall. Look for him on special teams in coverage.



8 Chris Rogers
Sophomore • Safety •
5-11, 190
Lakeland, Fla. •
Evangel Christian
Chris Rogers is
expected to provide
depth at the safety
spot and perhaps join

Justin Woodall in offering a serious challenge to the more experienced Marcus Carter in the battle for a starting role. Last season, Rogers played in 141 snaps in all 13 games and logged nine tackles and one fumble recovery. He can play cornerback as well as safety.



94 Keith Saunders
Senior • Linebacker •
6-3, 248
Willingboro, N.J. •
Holy Cross
The new Alabama
coaching staff created
a new position on the
defense-a linebacker-

defensive lineman hybrid that's been dubbed "Jack" linebacker-and the player chosen to fill that position was Keith Saunders. Playing as a defensive end last season, Saunders started in 10 games and finished with 16 tackles, three tackles for loss, one sack, one forced fumble, one fumble recovery, two pass breakups and onequarterbackpressure. Saunders apparently adapted well to his new position, earning the

Billy Neighbors Defensive Lineman Award in the spring.



46 Zach Schreiber
Sophomore •
Linebacker • 6-1, 211
Shreveport, La. •
Evangel Christian
Zach Schreiber will
probably begin fall
camp as Zeke Knight's
back-up at weakside

linebacker. But don't expect Schreiber to spend too much time as a sideline spectator. A strong spring showing, including a solid A-Day Game performance, should have the Louisiana native pushing for significant playing time. Schreiber's A-Day numbers included one solo tackle, one assisted tackle, one sack, one quarterback hurry and a batted down pass at the line of scrimmage. In limited action in '06, he recorded six tackles, 1.5 tackles for loss, one sack, one caused fumble and one fumble recovery.



54 Brian Selman
Sophomore • Snapper
• 6-0, 210
Vestavia Hills •
Vestavia Hills
Brian Selman is set
to become Alabama's
third snapper in as
many years, following

Drew Lane in '05 and Luke Spaulding in '06. As Spaulding's back-up last season, Selman got in on one play against Florida International.



26 Ali Sharrief
Sophomore • Strong
Safety • 5-9, 212
Stevenson • North
Jackson
With Alabama's
offensive backfield

becoming increasingly crowded, Ali Sharrief, considered the state's top running back coming out of high school in '04, was switched in the spring to the defensive backfield. Sharrief, who logged some linebacker experience in high school, responded well. He recorded one solo tackle and three assists in the A-Day Game and enters fall camp as Rashad Johnson's likely back-up at strong safety. In limited action last season, Sharrief carried six times for 38 yards.



48 Travis Sikes
Freshman •
Linebacker • 6-3, 195
Nashville, Tenn. •
Christ Presbyterian
Travis Sikes is
expected to serve as
a reserve linebacker
this fall, likely at the

weakside position. Sikes was a part of the '05 signing class who grayshirted before joining the squad in the spring of '06 as a strong safety.



71 Andre Smith
Sophomore •
Offensive Tackle •
6-4, 335
Birmingham •
Huffman
The big-literally and
figuratively-catch of
Alabama's '06 signing

class lived up to the hype last fall. Left tackle Andre Smith, an All-America candidate, started all 13 games as a true freshman, led the team with 62 knockdown blocks, and was one of only five players with more than 800 total snaps on the year. The 6-foot-4, 335-pounder even recorded more rushing touchdowns on the season than starting running back Ken Darby when he rumbled in from two yards out in the Independence Bowl. The Freshman All-America selection was spring winner of the

Paul Crane Offensive Lineman Award.



61 B.J. StablerJunior • Offensive
Tackle • 6-4, 307
Grove Hill • Clarke
County

A two-year starter on the offensive line, B.J. Stabler will in all likelihood continue

that streak this season-just at a different spot on the offensive line. After lining up at right guard last season, Stabler moved to right tackle in the spring. A sore knee slowed Stabler's transition process, but the '05 Freshman All-SEC selection is expected to adapt well to his new home this fall. Despite missing three games due to injury late last season, Stabler still finished with 48 knockdown blocks.



62 Alex StadlerFreshman • Offensive

Guard • 6-5, 318
Bealeton, Va. •
Liberty
Alex Stadler, one of
the members of the
Tide's highly touted
offensive line coup of

the '06 signing class, is expected to provide depth at right guard this fall, likely backing up Marlon Davis and Taylor Pharr. Stadler redshirted last season.



6 Marcel Stamps
Senior • Linebacker •
6-2, 199
Brantley • Brantley
He's been on offense.
He's currently on
defense. But where
Marcel Stamps has
made the most impact

as member of Alabama's football team is on

special teams, having recorded two blocked punts in his three-year career, returning one for a touchdown. His latest punt block came against Tennessee last season. Stamps, who began his career as a split end, has been a reserve linebacker for most of his career. Last year, he logged two tackles and one quarterback hurry.



9 Nikita Stover

Junior • Wide Receiver • 6-0, 204 Hartselle • Hartselle After an impressive spring, Nikita Stover has put himself in position to earn the No. 3 wide receiver

role for Alabama this fall. Of course, the emergence of Stover isn't surprising. Last season, he had a key catch to help the Tide get past Vanderbilt, caught his first career touchdown pass against LSU, and then turned in a five-catch, 101-yard, one-touchdown effort against Auburn. In the spring A-Day Game, Stover suited up with fellow receivers DJ Hall and Keith Brown on the first-team offense and showed he belonged there by making three catches for 58 yards and a touchdown. Stover, who joined the Tide in the spring of '06, played his freshman season at Itawamba (Mississippi) Community College. He redshirted his second year of junior college in order to have three years of eligibility at Bama. He was the state's top prospect as a prep senior in 2003.



Freshman • Defensive End • 6-2, 233

90 Milton Talbert

Hattiesburg, Miss. •
Hattiesburg
Milton Talbert,
Alabama's lone
defensive line signee
in '06, redshirted last

season and is expected to back up Wallace Gilberry at left end this fall. Talbert logged one solo tackle and four assisted tackles in the A-Day Game.

that. In the spring A-Day Game, Tiffin was good from 46 and 28 yards. He's the son of legendary Bama placekicker Van Tiffin.



39 Jamar Taylor
Freshman • Running
Back • 5-10, 205
Lakeland, Fla. •
Lakeland
Like fellow '07 signee
Kareem Jackson,
running back Jamar
Taylor enrolled at

Alabama early so he could take part in spring drills. And, like Jackson, Taylor showed he's more than ready for college competition. In the A-Day Game, Taylor rushed 10 times for 44 yards for a 4.4 yards per carry average. Of the five running backs who participated in the game, only Terry Grant had better stats. As a high school senior in '06, Taylor rushed for 1,113 yards on 175 carries and scored 15 touchdowns.



18 Leigh Tiffin

Sophomore • Kicker •

5-10, 170

Muscle Shoals •

Muscle Shoals

Leigh Tiffin likely enters fall camp as the Tide's No.

2 kicker behind

Jamie Christensen. Tiffin does have starting experience, though. Early last season with Christensen nursing an injured groin, Tiffin stepped into the starting role and was good on 3-of-4 field goals in the season opener and then was 2-of-2 against Vanderbilt, including hitting the game-winner from 47 yards out. He made 2-of-3 against Louisiana-Monroe in week three before experiencing his first rough outing against Arkansas in week four. Christensen returned from injury in week five, limiting Tiffin's game appearances after



5 Roy Upchurch
Sophomore • Running
Back • 6-0, 191
Tallahassee, Fla. •
Godby
Injuries have cut
short Roy Upchurch's
first two seasons, but
the former Parade

All-America has the tools to be a big-time ball-carrier when healthy. In week three last season against Louisiana-Monroe, he rushed 12 times for 37 yards and two touchdowns before undergoing season-ending ankle surgery. In the A-Day Game, suiting up with the second-team offense, he had a 14-yard run and finished with 26 yards on three carries. Upchurch likely enters fall camp behind Jimmy Johns, Terry Grant and Glen Coffee, but the running backs are closely bunched.



44 Demarcus
Waldrop
Senior • Linebacker •
5-11, 200
Pinson • Pinson
Valley
Demarcus Waldrop is
expected to push for
playing time at the

weakside linebacker spot this fall. Last season, the former Pinson Valley standout played in all 13 games and started three games-against Louisiana-Monroe, Arkansas and Florida-and finished with 21 tackles, one forced fumble and one quarterback hurry. He was limited by injury in the spring, making it difficult for him to move up the depth chart.



88 Nick Walker
Junior • Tight End •
6-5, 270
Brundidge • Pike
County
For a guy who earned
Freshman All-SEC
honors in '05, Nick
Walker is finding it

increasingly difficult to hold on to a starting job. After starting 11 games and logging nine catches for 120 yards as a true freshman two seasons ago, Walker started just once in '06 and ended the year with three catches for 39 yards and one touchdown. It now appears Walker may have slipped to the No. 3 tight end behind last year's starter, Travis McCall, and redshirt freshman Preston Dial. Coach Nick Saban has said that he likes to have a lot of tight ends available for various duties. Walker had one catch for 17 yards in the A-Day Game.



77 Byron Walton
Sophomore •
Defensive Tackle •
6-3, 306
Trinity • West
Morgan
Byron Walton enters
fall camp behind
Brian Motley in the

battle for the starting nose tackle job. Walton got in on only two snaps last season but did record one tackle. In the spring, he had one assisted tackle in the A-Day Game and was a co-recipient, along with Baron Huber, of the Derrick Thomas Community Service Award.



97 Lorenzo
Washington
Sophomore •
Defensive Tackle •
6-4, 269
Logansville, Ga. •
Grayson
Lorenzo Washington
should see some

action at nose tackle this season but is likely to start fall camp behind Brian Motley and Byron Walton on the depth chart. Washington appeared in seven games last season, participating in 32 snaps. Because of injury, he was unable to have contact in the spring.



Wilson
Junior • Quarterback
• 6-2, 209
Hoover • Hoover
John Parker Wilson
needed just one
season to prove he's
not only ready and
capable of serving as

14 John Parker

the Tide's starting quarterback, he's ready and capable of becoming one of the Tide's better all-time quarterbacks. Despite taking some hard hits and dealing with a bum ankle, the former Hoover star started all 13 games in '06, passing for a school record 2,707 yards and a school record 17 touchdowns. His nine 200-yard games also set a school record as did his 379 attempts and 216 completions. Wilson showed a good grasp of Alabama's new offense in the spring, including growing more comfortable working out of the shotgun formation. In the A-Day Game, he completed 18-of-36 passes for 244 yards and two touchdowns. He received the Johnny Musso Offensive Back Award.



27 Justin Woodall
Sophomore • Safety •
6-1, 213
Oxford, Miss. •
Lafayette County
Justin Woodall, one
of the Tide's top
all-around athletes
as evidenced by his

being drafted as a baseball pitcher by the New York Mets coming out of high school, is expected to see action at safety this fall. He'll start off as a back-up to Marcus Carter. Last season, in a reserve role, Woodall participated in 122 snaps, recording six tackles and one pass breakup. He also blocked a punt against Ole Miss. In the spring A-Day Game, he had one solo tackle and one assisted tackle.





"Desperation Block"

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WHAT LIES AHEAD?

Newcomers Most Likely To Contribute This year

To one is redshirted because he is too good. That said, there also are circumstances that make it more likely or less likely that a signee will earn playing time in the fall. Two members of the 2007 Alabama football signing class have a leg up on their Bama brethren. Cornerback Kareem Jackson and running back Jamar Taylor entered The University last January and took part in the Crimson Tide's off-season program and in spring practice.

Jackson and Taylor are far ahead of their fellow newcomers insofar as knowing schemes and having had a taste of the regimen that is Nick Saban football.

But that doesn't necessarily mean that either Jackson or Taylor will have an opportunity in a game this season.

Until a couple of years ago freshmen were not eligible for varsity play. There was freshman football, or junior varsity football, but mostly the freshmen were members of the scout team. Primarily to allow for players to recover from an injury, the redshirt policy was established. Before the freshman-eligible rule, players were often redshirted in the sophomore year, then had three years of varsity eligibility remaining.

Once freshmen were made eligible for varsity play in the early 1970s, it became common practice to hold those first year players out for a year, preserving the last four years of the five-year eligibility window for varsity competition.

Before any other factor comes into play, a player must be academically eligible. Although bits and pieces of academic information slip out from time-to-time, no one is eligible until the NCAA Clearinghouse gives its approval. For most, that comes in the summer. It is true that Alabama has a number of signees who are anxiously awaiting that final stamp, and Crimson Tide

coaches and fans are equally anxious.

For those players who are academically eligible and in sound health, there are other hurdles.

If a team has a number of proven performers at a position, it may not be possible for a newcomer to have the opportunity to show coaches that he is capable of contributing to the team in his freshman year. Until a couple of years ago there was a brief period (two or three days) when newcomers came in before returning varsity players to learn nomenclature and schemes and to become acclimated to college football. It may be then that newcomers had a little better chance to earn notice from the coaches, and therefore a better chance to earn playing time.

If a team has a lack of proven talent at a position, that could work in favor of the newcomer getting an opportunity to play. If the team is short of linebackers, a linebacker signee would be foolish to report in anything but the very best condition.

Sometimes it doesn't matter about the depth situation. Coaches make recruiting mistakes. As much as the team may need help from a freshman at safety, if the freshman isn't good enough he's probably not going to play. That is not to say he won't be good enough in a year or two or three.

Any discussion of freshmen participating must also note the propensity of coaches to use true freshmen to fill in spots on special teams, particularly in coverage and returns.

What appears to be likely in June or July can change drastically when practice begins in August and when competition begins in September. But looking ahead to fall practice, where are members of the 2007 signing class likely to spend this first season?

Last year it was not too risky to suggest that a freshman or two might come in and win a starting job. After all, the 2006 signing class included Andre Smith, nationally considered to be the best offensive line prospect and the second best prospect regardless of position. Smith didn't disappoint. It took him only a practice or two to nail down the starting left tackle spot, and he ended up having more playing time than any other Tide player in 2006. Javier Arenas had a big time reputation as a kick return specialist, and he didn't disappoint in that role as a true freshman for the Tide.

Smith is one of a handful of players who have been able to play in the offensive line as true freshmen, which goes against the grain of conventional coaching wisdom. Almost everyone agrees that quarterback is the most difficult position for a true freshman to play. In the spring Bama defensive end Bobby Greenwood showed off the thick binder he carried with him, the playbook for his position. "I can't imagine what John Parker's looks like," Greenwood said, referring to the volume of knowledge a quarterback must have.

Historically, freshmen have been most likely to contribute at a skill position-wide receiver, running back, defensive back-or as a kicking teams specialist.

A football adage has it that a team can't have too many defensive tackles. Alabama's previous coaching staff must not have heard that one. Bama is woefully short at the position. Many, many good defensive tackles have spent two or three years far from starting positions before finally blossoming into stars.

Alabama has opportunity at defensive tackle. Nevertheless, it would be a wild prediction to suggest that a freshman will come in and be a major contributor at the position. One other factor is that academic concerns are great for the incoming corps of defensive tackles.

Even though it is considered one of the best groups in the nation, the freshmen defensive tackles–Josh Chapman, Jeremy

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Elder, Nick Gentry, Alfred McCullough, and Kerry Murphy-are most likely to be redshirted or used as back-ups.

Among Alabama's strongest positions are the defensive ends, but those are not Alabama's deepest positions. Wallace Gilberry and Bobby Greenwood as starters provide confidence in the positions, and good things are expected from back-ups, particularly Brandon Deaderick. It's difficult to assign defensive end to the signees who are designated as ends because in Alabama's defense an end can become an outside linebacker, as was the case with Keith Saunders and Ezekial Knight. One of Bama's most highly-regarded signees is Luther Davis, and he seems most likely to see early action from the defensive end group. This is another strong signing area with Alex Watkins and Chavis Williams having a chance to play, particularly on special teams.

Alabama Head Coach Nick Saban said that he liked to have a lot of "tight end and fullback body-type" players to use on special teams. Considering Alabama's depth at tight end, it would seem if Chris Underwood is going to play as a freshman it would be on special teams. It's difficult to guage the use of a fullback based on the A-Day Game, but fullback signee Jeramie Griffin would seem to have kicking game potential.

Linebacker body types also fall into Saban's category for special teams, but this year Alabama may need immediate help at linebacker. And perhaps the Tide's most highly-regarded signee is a linebacker. Rolando McClain is mentioned frequently in analyses of 2007 Bama as a freshman likely to work his way into the playing rotation. Although Jennings Hester doesn't have the same reputation, he'll get the same opportunity to show if he can add to linebacker depth.

It seems that Alabama has a lot of wide receivers, but at least a couple of them have been injury prone. The Saban offense appears likely to use a lot of wide receivers, so even a crowded field may have room for more. Brandon Gibson arrives at Bama with the best credentials among wide receivers. Darius Hanks is thin and Marquis Maze is very, very small.

Tarence Farmer could end up at wide receiver or defensive back. The secondary is another place where there may be a lot of players, but where a lot of players are needed. At one point in the spring Saban said over 50 per cent of Alabama's defensive practice time was spent with five or six defensive backs. Kareem Jackson showed in the spring he can compete for playing time. Junior college transfer safety Michael Ricks and freshman safety Chris Lett will have to show what they can do in August.

There's room for only one tailback at a time on the field on offense, and Alabama has a bundle of them, making it tough for a newcomer. Jamar Taylor had an excellent A-Day Game, but it's hard to put him high up on the depth chart at tailback. Demetrius Goode will start out sixth on the depth chart at running back.

Alabama returns all starters and a handful of back-up players in the offensive line. There are a few offensive linemen who were held out last year as freshmen. In addition to the inherent difficulty of playing as an offensive lineman in the first year, that depth makes it unlikely that signees Patrick Crump and William Vlachos will make it past the scout team in 2007.

As previously mentioned, quarterback is considered the least usually position where a freshman wil be a starter. But that doesn't mean a freshman might not see considerable playing time under certain circumstances (likely bad circumstances). The story is exaggerated almost to the point of being apocryphal, but Gene Stallings was asked one spring who the likely back-up quarterback would be. He named an incoming freshman. "He's the only one I haven't seen," the coach deadpanned.

Alabama's back-up quarterbacks are Jimmy Barnes, coming off knee surgery and a very limited spring, and redshirt freshman Greg McElroy, who was kept from view for most of the spring until an A-Day performance that was neither good nor bad. So can Nick Fanuzzi beat the odds and earn quarterback playing time as a freshman? There are markedly mixed reports on Fanuzzi's potential, but the odds favor a redshirt year for the incoming freshman.

FINAL 2006 ALABAMA FOOTBALL STATISTICS Record: 6-7 SEC: 2-6 Tuscaloosa: 6-2 Road: 0-4 Neutral: 0-1

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Inc	innid	110	OH	ense
1110	uvu	1141	1111	PHSP

Team

Individual Defense

RUSHING C				Loss		TD LP			U of A	Opponents		Primary	Assist	Total	For Loss-Yard	ds
Darby 1.		835	889	54	4.0	0 37		RST DOWNS	247	196		44	42	86	2-9	
Johns 1. T. Castille 1.		293 129	318	25	4.4 2.8	1 26 6 11	By Rush		97	89	Simpson	42	44	86	6-16	
Wilson 1		83	290	207	1.0	0 27	By Passi		128	97	P. Hall S. Castille	46	31	77 71	10.5-28 4.5-17	
McClain 13		64	64	0	5.8	0 15	By Penal		22	10	Jones	22	35	57	2-14	
D.J. Hall 13		48	48	0	8.0	0 21		FFENSIVE YARDS	4367	3870	Robinson	30	16	46	1.5-4	
Brown 1		45	47	2	7.5	0.20		n Per Game	335.9	297.7	Gilberry	22	21	43	10.5-31	
Sharrief 1:	6	38	38	0	6.3	0 21	Total Pla		848	740	R. Johnson	22	11	33	1.5-4	
Upchurch -		37	37	0	3.1	2 7		ys Per Game	65.2	56.9	Carter	17	14	31	1-1	
	3 2	22	22	0	11.0	0 19		n Per Play	5.1	5.2		11	16	27	5-30	
Caddell 13		10	10		10.0	0 10		DS RUSHING	1600	1620	Mitchell Clark	17	8	25 24		
Smith 13		2	2	0	2.0	1 2	and the same	n Per Game	123.1	124.6	Waldrop	9	12	21		
Denniston 2		2	2	0	2.0	0 2		Attempts	455	409	Harris	13	7	20	1-1	
Fitzgerald 13		2	2	0	2.0	0 2		n Per Rush	3.5	4.0	Gray	10	7	17	9.5	
	2 2 3 2	-5 -5	0	8	-2.5	0 3		ined Rushing	1905	1882	Saunders	7	9	16	3-14	
Team 13 PASSING G		Comp				O O TD LP		st Rushing	305	262	Kilpatrick	8	6	1.4		
Wilson 13	379	216			57.0	17 78		DS PASSING n Per Game	2767	2250	Lee	5	8	13	2-5	
Barnes 2	n	6	0		54.5	1 14			212.8	173.1	Collins Burnthall	6	3	11	1.5-18	
Guillon 2	2	2	0	15 10		0 10		n Per Attempt	7.0	6.8	Rogers	4	5	9		
Brown 11	1	0	0	-	0.0		Attempts	n Per Completion	393	12.2 331	Mustin	4	4	8		
RECEIVING	G	No	Yds	Avg.	. TD	LP	Complet		224	184	M. Johnson	2	5	7		
D.J. Hall	12	62	1056	17.0) 5	78	Percenta		57.0%		Woodall	6	0	6		
Brown		44	590	13.4		38	Had Inte		10	55.6% 16	Schreiber	4	2	6	1.5-6	
Oakley		18	223	12.4		35		TERCEPTED BY	16	10	Johns	4	2	6	24	
Stover		12	192	16.0		52		eturned	266	199	Adams	1	5	6	1-2	
McClain		20	175	8.8		26	Average		18.2	19.9	Knight McClain	3	1	4	1-3	
Caddell		16	150	9.4		18	The second secon	AVERAGE	38.2	39.2	Anders	2	2	4		
Darby McCall	13	23	130	5.7 13.1		29	Number		57	67	Spaulding	3	Ö	3		
T. Castille		15	91	6.1		17	Yards Pu		2176	2628	McCall	2	1	3		
Walker	13	3	39	13.0		22	Had Blog		0	3	Fitzgerald	2	0	2		
Johns	12	i	16	16.0		16		S RETURNED	31	56	T. Castille	2	0	2		
Huber	9	1	4	4.0		4	Yards Re		564	1080	Stamps	1	1	2		
Wilson	13	1	-4	-4.0		-4	Average		18.2	19.3	Christensen Deaderick	0	2	2		
PUNTING	G	No	Yds	Avg.	В	LK LP	PUNTS RI		34	26	Reamer	1	ō	ī		
Fitzgerald	13	57	2176	38.2	. 0	55	Yards Re		308	190	Wilson	1	0	1		
PUNT							Average		9.1	7.3	Brown	1	0	1		
RETURNS	G	No	Yds	Avg.		D LP	PENALTIE		78	90	Barger	1	0	1		
Arenas	13	31	286	9.2			Yards Per		557	732	Smith	1	0	1		
S. Castille	13	3	22	7.3	0	16		ls Per Game	42.8	56.3	Walton	0	1	1		
KICKOFF	-				***		FUMBLES		19-10	22-11	Vandervoort	0	- de	1		
RETURNS	G	No	Yd				TOUCHDO		34	30	INTERCEPT	IONS G	No	Yds A	Avg TD LI	P
Arenas Hall	13	18	134		0		By Rushi		10	12	S. Castille	13			1.8 0 60	
R. Johnson	11	4					By Passir		18	15	Mitchell	12		131 3	2.8 1 51	1
Johns	12	2					Other	0	6	3	Dukes	12			3.0 1 24	
Kilpatrick	13	0						ALS -ATTEMPTS	21-30	13-18	Robinson	13			2.0 1 34	
Burnthall	13	0	1 2					INTS-ATTEMPTS	29-33	29-30	Simpson	12			2.0 0 2	2
SCORING T	D PAT	F.G	-FGA	SAF 2		TOTAL	By Kickin		29-31	27-28	FUMBLES CA					
Christensen	17-18		13-17			56	By Passir	ig .	0-2	2-2					rter 1, Knight 1,	0
Tiffin	12-13		8-13			36	By Rushi		0-0	0-0	Jones 1, Sauno			astille 1	, Waldrop I,	
T. Castille	6					36	By Defen		0	0	Gilberry 1, Ha			rille 3 f	Hall 2, Lee 1,	
D.J. Hall	5					30	SAFETIES		1	0	Reamer 1, Sau					
Brown	3					18	TOTAL PO	INTS	298	250					stille 6, Dukes 2,	
McClain Arenas	2					18	Avg. Poir	its Per Game	22.9	19.2	Gray 2, Saund					
Caddell	2					12	POSSESSI	ON DOWNS	198	178	Kilpatrick 1, C					
Upchurch	2					12	Conversi		84	64	QUARTERBA	CK PRESSU	RES: Gil	herry 10	Simpson 5, S.	
Stover	2					12	Efficience		42.4%	36.0%					inders 1, Stamps	
Walker	1					6			337075	-5.5	1, Collins 1, Sci					
P. Hall	1					6					KICKS BLOC	KED: Wood	tall 1 (pu	mt), Sta	mps 1 (punt),	
Mitchell	1					6					Rayford 1 (pur					
lohns	1					6		200	6 AL	ABAMA	FOOTBALL	RESI	IITS			
R. Robinson	7					6	Date	Opponent	Sit		LOCIDILL	Result		TAI	tendance) or	
Dukes Darby	1					6	Dute	орронеш	Jit		Cantral	Time (TV			series Record	
McCall	1					6	Sent 2	Hawaii	Tim	scaloosa	UofA 25,	COURT WITH		3		
Smith	1					6		Vanderbilt		scaloosa					(92,138)	
ГЕАМ				1		2	Sept. 16				UofA 13, Var				(92,138)	
Wilson					0-2	0	13.4			scaloosa		Monroe			(92,138)	
CORE BY Q	UARTE	RS:					Sept. 23	Arkansas			Arkansas 24, UA				(74,687)	
lst	2nd	3rd		OT	Tot		Sept. 30			inesville		28, UA 1			(90,671)	
ALABAMA 53		69	79	12	- 29	98	Oct. 7	Duke		scaloosa), Duke 1			(92,138)	
Opponents 44		46	48	10	- 25	50	Oct. 14	Mississippi		scaloosa	UA 26, Ole Mis				(92,138))
TIME OF POS		N		Uola		Opp.	Oct. 21	Tennessee		oxville	UT	16, UA 1	3		(106,695))
First Q				107:15	5	87:45	Oct. 28	Florida Int'l (HC)	Tus	scaloosa	UA	38, FIU	3		(92,138)	
Second				96:08		98:52	Nov. 4	Mississippi State		scaloosa		24, UA 1			(92,138)	
100 P				112:46		82:14	Nov. 11	LSU		ton Rouge		28, UA 1			(92,588)	
Third				102:19	9	92:41	Nov. 18	Auburn		scaloosa		22, UA 1				
Fourth				419.00	2	361.23									(9) 1381	3
				418:28		361:32 27:48	Dec. 28	Oklahoma State		lependence		34, UA 3			(92,138) (45,054)	

FOOTBALL BY THOMAS MURPHY

NICK SABAN

Electricity Crackles Around Tide's Head Coach

The house that Paul "Bear" Bryant built has had its foundation shaken more than a couple of times in this last quarter century.

Today, the edifice that is Alabama football seems to be straightening its girders, rising up once again to at least peer at its previous heights.

At the top of the structure, of course, stands the lightning rod.

Nick Saban will not often be the tallest guy in a roomful of men, but the electricity crackling around him cannot be disputed.

With nearly four weeks to contemplate the potential hiring of Saban late last year, the Crimson nation was stoked up, bursting with anticipation. Alabama Athletics Director Mal Moore's long, lonely wait and his roll of the dice on Saban paid off handsomely on January 3, when Saban and his family flew into Tuscaloosa to an uproarious scene at the airport.

"It certainly was a lot of positive selfgratification for me that the people here appreciated the fact I was going to be the coach here," Saban said at the time.

Saban's arrival at The Capstone uncorked animated discussion across the land in terms of his market-bending salary package, and inflamed passions in Southeastern Conference venues across the landscape.

Of course Saban's straightforward talk— "You know we have an opponent in this state that we will work 365 days a year to dominate," he said at his first press conference—will make him a permanent magnet for commentary.

At LSU, which Saban guided to the 2003 BCS national championship, his former fans couldn't believe he would come back to the conference at the campus of a key rival. Third-year LSU Coach Les Miles, speaking to a raucous band of supporters at a National Signing Day function, offered up a dismissive expletive to welcome Saban back to the SEC West.

At Auburn, Tommy Tuberville supporters scrambled to frame up a head-to-head comparison between the coaches and make it known they were ready for the cross-state



Mitch Dobb

rivalry to rachet up a couple of notches.

Few things brighten the outlook of an Alabama football fan more than having rival schools concerned about what's happening at The Capstone.

After seven years of staking out space in the headlines for mostly the wrong reasons, Alabama football appears to be pointing toward new heights. The column inches and sound bytes devoted to Crimson Tide football regionally and nationally since the start of the year would likely be rivalled only by national champion Florida among all college teams.

Nick Saban's presence has made that possible.

"We have spent top dollar to get top facilities, and we felt that we needed a coach that complemented these facilities, and we think we've got it," said an ecstatic Joe Espy III, president pro tem of The University Board of Trustees, on the day of Saban's introductory press conference. "We feel we have the pieces of the puzzle that will bring this program back to where our people expect it to be."

HARD WORK AHEAD

With Nick Saban plugged into the Alabama program, coming in with credentials

that haven't been seen in these parts since Bryant came home to momma, the intensity is up everywhere.

Some Alabama fans are calling for an immediate return to the top of the league standings, despite the Tide's deficiencies on the defensive front seven. Saban is trying to tamp down the expectation part and is asking fans to concentrate on the process it takes to build and sustain a quality program.

"I have a tremendous amount of respect for the fans, and the passion our fans have," Saban said in a spring interview. "I think the tradition, all those things kind of go hand-inhand with it. I understand the expectations, but I also understand what it takes to accomplish those things.

"The process and procedure of what you have to get where you want to go. It just doesn't happen by waving a wand. It takes a lot of hard work and it takes a lot of commitment by a lot of people. It takes a lot of perseverance. We're all going to have to overcome some adversity together in the building process, I'm sure."

Saban's arrival—and the media focus on him, his policies and his path to Tuscaloosa—took some of the focus off of and removed some of the heat from some aspects of the team, such as a highly criticized offensive line, an underachieving running game, a pitiful red-zone offense and a depletion of talent on the defensive front.

The south Florida media, reflecting the outrage of many Dolphins fans, fixated on the famous "I guess I have to say it, I'm not going to be the Alabama coach," sound byte Saban uttered shortly before Christmas. Later, an off-the-record anecdote Saban related to the Miami media, in which he used the term "coonass" to refer to a native of southern Louisiana, surfaced on talk radio and the Internet, creating a tempest in a teapot.

The media and the populace seemingly couldn't get enough of the lightning rod Saban.

Meanwhile, the 55-year-old Saban was simply embracing the move back to a college

THE NICK SABAN FILE

PERSONAL:

A native of Fairmont, West Virginia, Nick Lou Saban born October 31, 1951. He and his wife, the former Terry Constable, have two children, Nicholas and Kristen.

EDUCATION:

Kent State University, 1973, business degree; Kent State University, 1975, masters degree in sports administration.

He was a defensive back under Don James at Kent State, where he was on the only conference championship team in school history.

His first year as head coach at Alabama will be his 35th year as a coach in the college and professional ranks, and his fifth head coaching position.

COACHING CAREER:

As	an	assis	tant	coac	h:
		COULD		cour	•••

1973	Kent State graduate assistant
1974	Kent State graduate assistant
1975	Kent State secondary
1976	Kent State secondary
1977	Syracuse linebackers
1978	West Virginia secondary
1979	West Virginia secondary
1980	Ohio State secondary
1981	Ohio State secondary
1982	Navy secondary
1983-87	Michigan State defensive coordinator
1988-89	Houston Oilers secondary
1991-94	Cleveland Browns defensive coordinator

AS A HEAD COACH:

Year	Team	Recor
1990	Toledo	9-2
1995	Michigan State	6-5-1
1996	Michigan State	6-6
1997	Michigan State	7-5
1998	Michigan State	6-6
1999	Michigan State	9-2
2000	LSU	8-4
2001	LSU	10-3
2002	LSU	8-5
2003	LSU	13-1
2004	LSU	9-3
2005	Miami Dolphins	9-7
2006	Miami Dolphins	6-10

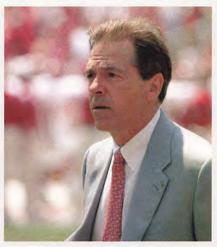
Conege (rears)	Kecora
LSU (2000-04)	48-16, .750
Michigan State (1995-99)	34-24-1, .585
Toledo (1990)	9-2, .818
TOTALS (11 Years)	91-42-1, .683

NFL (Years)

Record Miami Dolphins (2005-06) 15-17, .469

Head Coach Record:

13 Years, 106-59-1, .642



town, where he and his supportive and highly visible wife Terry feel most at home.

Saban is not comfortable talking about the weeks that led up to his move to Tuscaloosa, but he reflected on what he could have done different in an April interview.

"The only thing I would probably do different is-obviously when you get criticized the way I got criticized for the way it all kind of came down-I would have made one statement about my commitment to finishing the season and then said, 'I'm not talking about this again until the season's over," Saban said. "Because in people prying information and trying to get information about the circumstance, I actually told the truth all the time about what my thoughts were and what my commitment was relative to the time, then got criticized for it. When the season was over and the times changed and I was going to make a professional assessment about the direction I was going to go and we were going to go as a family and all that, then I got criticized for it. That's my fault."

Saban also maintains that his move to Alabama and back to the college game was not motivated by the money. As for the resounding ripples his contract-believed to be a guaranteed \$32 million over eight years-has caused across the NCAA landscape, he keeps it simple.

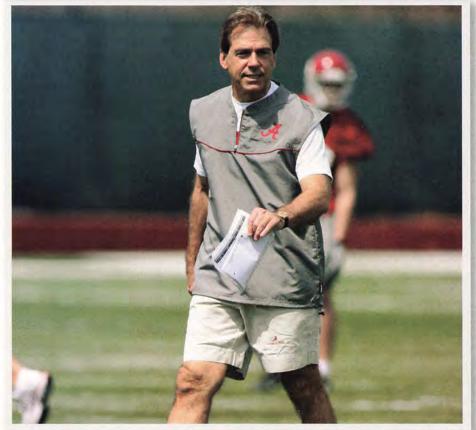
"I don't know how to answer that," he said, "I don't know, I mean, if I wasn't worth it, then to me the school shouldn't pay it."

Obviously Moore and the big brass at Alabama were prepared to deal with the salary ruckus if it meant landing a coach of Saban's stature.

"The figures we've seen indicate that this program can pay for a coach of that magnitude and a coach of the magnitude of Nick Saban can enhance (the capital campaign) that's already going on," said

ALABAMA COACHES' RECORDS

Coach	Years	Won-Lost-Tied	Pct.
E.B. Beaumont	1892	2-2-0	.500
Eli Abbnott	1893-95, 1902	7-12-0	.368
Otto Wagonhurst	1896	2-1-0	.667
Allen McCants	1897	1-0-0	1.000
W.A. Martin	1899	3-1-0	.750
M. Griffin	1900	2-3-0	.400
M.H. Harvey	1901	2-1-2	.600
W.B. Blount	1903-04	10-7-0	.588
Jack Leavenworth	1905	6-4-0	.600
J.W.H. Pollard	1906-09	20-4-5	.776
Guy Lowman	1910	4-4-0	.500
D.V. Graves	1911-14	21-12-3	.625
Thomas Kelly	1915-17	17-7-1	.700
Xen C. Scott	1919-22	29-9-3	.744
Wallace Wade	1923-30	61-13-3	.812
Frank Thomas	1931-46	115-24-7	.812
H.D. Drew	1947-54	55-29-7	.643
J.B. Whitworth	1955-57	4-24-2	.167
Paul W. Bryant	1958-82	232-46-9	.824
Ray Perkins	1983-86	32-15-1	.677
Bill Curry	1987-89	26-10-0	.722
Gene Stallings	1990-96	70-16-1	.810
Mike DuBose	1997-2000	24-23-0	.511
Dennis Franchione	2001-02	17-8-0	.680
Mike Price			
Mike Shula	2003-06	26-24-0	.520
Totals		788-299-44	.716



University of Alabama

John England, Jr., an athletics committee member of the Board of Trustees.

"We think this is an excellent investment that will be well-proven over the next few years," Espy said. "Fiscally, we think it's very responsible.

"I tell you something we've already got that you can't judge in terms of dollars ... the literal enthusiasm of our people. That means so much."

THE PROGRAM

So the Crimson nation is euphoric about having Saban heading up its football program. Is a consistent winner on the immediate horizon for Alabama?

Saban has rapidly installed an infrastructure at Alabama that has proved effective at his other collegiate stops, where he has amassed a career record of 91-42-1 (.683), including two SEC championships and one national title at LSU. The formula relies on accountability, discipline, and mental and physical toughness.

Crimson Tide players raved over the intensity of Saban's Fourth Quarter Program during the offseason.

"It's amazing what kind of football player you transform into after those five weeks," junior center Antoine Caldwell said. "From a conditioning standpoint, from strength in the weight room. It's probably the most physically and mentally demanding thing I've done since I've been in college.

"We kind of expected that with Coach Saban taking over. (It's) the most incredible program."

Saban, a native of Fairmont, West Virginia, and a graduate of Kent State, amassed his Fourth Quarter Program—"Discipline, commitment, effort and toughness makes pride," he describes it—as an aggressive, bright and perceptive student of the game through numerous stops in the college and pro ranks.

Cornerback Simeon Castille used the single word "pain" to depict the program.

"And mental toughness," Castille added. "That's probably the biggest thing. It was a good program though. It's going to get you in shape."

Saban gets downright irate when the subject of expectations crops up regarding his first Tide team. Maybe expectations will always be a taboo topic with him.

Yet it is a undodgeable truth for a football team. How good can you be? Can you compete for an SEC championship?

Of course Alabama's players were asked what impact Saban would have on the program in the near and far terms.



Jniversity of Ala

"I'm glad he came in and did what he did, his whole mindset and how he approaches things," senior receiver DJ Hall said.

"You know, I think he's brought some discipline, on and off the field," added junior quarterback John Parker Wilson. "I think our guys are really getting into this every-playmatters mindset."

Saban can be extreme. He can be intense and a little off-center. But people tend to gravitate toward a winner, and Saban appears to have mastered that facet of coaching as a matter of course.

"He's definitely teaching us to be better leaders in our community and on the field," said senior defensive end Wallace Gilberry.

Have the Alabama players found that trying to please a coach who has claimed, "I'm a perfectionist, so I'm never satisfied with where we are," is too difficult?

"Nah, that's how life is," Hall said. "We love him to death. We see it as if he's not on you, he doesn't care about you. So, if he's on you you know he cares about you."

As a bottom line, the Crimson Tide players understand they can co-exist just fine with a difficult taskmaster when they know what lies ahead.

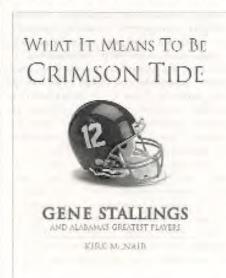
"He's been more than great for this football team," Caldwell said. "Coach Saban has come in and done a great job with us. What he's done in the past, winning championships, he knows what it takes to get there.

"You know, if everybody on this team buys into what he's trying to do, I feel like we're just as talented as any other team in the SEC."

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE CRIMSON TIDE

GENE STALLINGS AND ALABAMA'S GREATEST PLAYERS

Alabama football means championships and All-Americans and, for many, memories of a man in a houndstooth hat. Some 60 former Alabama players who per-



formed in Crimson and White over a 75-year period tell us What It means to be Crimson Tide, and many remember Paul "Bear" Bryant. His time as a Bama player, assistant coach, and 25 years as head coach is a major part of Alabama football, but not the only great era. There have also been national championships won under Wallace Wade and Frank Thomas and Gene Stallings. And part of What It means to be Crimson Tide is former Alabama players' expectations of more national titles.

The last coach to lead Alabama to the national championship is Gene Stallings, who played and coached for Coach Bryant before becoming a Hall

of Fame caliber coach himself.

Not only have the coaches been legendary but that stellar tradition has spawned players enshrined in the College Football Hall of Fame and the NFL's Pro Football Hall of Fame. Now, Gene Stallings and 'Bama Editor Kirk McNair have collaborated to bring together many of the greatest players ever to wear the Crimson and White to share their memories in What IT Means to be Crimson Tide-Gene Stallings and Alabama's Greatest players.

Among those sharing their memories are: from the '40s and '50s, Harry Gilmer and Bart Starr; from the '60s and '70s, Lee Roy Jordan, Joe Namath, Ray Perkins, Ken Stabler, Johnny Musso, John Hannah, and Ozzie Newsome; from the '80s and '90s, Mike Shula and Jay Barker. And many more, including those from the new millennium.

Gene Stallings reveals much of his philosophy and also tells the story of how he did *not* become Alabama's head football coach in 1983. Kirk McNair introduces the players.

What it Means to be Crimson Tide-Gene Stallings and Alabama's greatest players is now available. The hardcover book is more than 300 pages in an oversized format with archival photographs throughout. To order your copy (\$27.95 plus tax, shipping and handling) call 1-205-345-5074. You may request a personalized autograph from Kirk McNair.

FOOTBALL BY KIRK McNAIR

CRIMSON TIDE TRADITION

Alabama Football Success Is Staggering

n addition to Alabama, six Southeastern Conference teams have won consensus national football championships. Those six-Florida (2), LSU (2), Tennessee (2), Georgia (1), Ole Miss (1) and Auburn (1)-combined have nine titles. The Crimson Tide has seven. (Bama can claim quite a few more, but these are

Alabama is not challenged as the most dominant team in SEC history with 21 championships more than one-and-a-half times more than runner-up Tennessee.

Alabama sits high above the all-time SEC standings.

And Alabama has a winning record against every SEC football opponent.

Alabama claims championships-it could be as many as 18 according to some sources, while Bama's rivals claim the Tide has no more than six-as if that isn't very many. (The SEC usually lists only those awarded by the Associated Press, United Press International, Coaches Poll and BCS, which is seven for Alabama.) However they are counted, Alabama ranks among the national leaders in national titles.

Alabama also is among the nation's best in victories and winning percentage. No team has a bowl tradition like the Crimson Tide, nationally number one in bowl appearances (54) and bowl victories (30), with much of Bama bowl success coming in the major bowls with national implications.

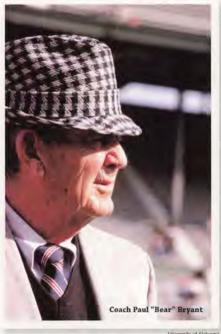
The Crimson Tide is best in the nation in seasons with 10 or more victories at 28.

It has been suggested that 11 SEC teams have an inferiority complex when it comes to football. Others suggest it is not a complex: the other 11 are inferior to the Crimson Tide.

Alabama is one of that small handful of college football teams that is truly national. Notre Dame, of course. Oklahoma, Texas, Southern Cal, Michigan, Ohio State, and Penn State are there. Teams like FSU, Miami, Nebraska and Tennessee lurk just outside the elite.

Alabama will concede, as many of its rivals point out, that Alabama Crimson Tide football tradition did benefit from having the greatest coach of all time, Paul William "Bear" Bryant.

The Bryant record is mind-boggling, even nearly a quarter century after his death. He was head coach at Maryland (6-2-1 in 1945), Kentucky (60-23-5, 1946-53), Texas A&M (25-14-2, 1954-57) and Alabama (1958-82, 232-46-9) giving him a coaching record of 323-85-17.



His Alabama teams won 13 SEC championships and he also won a league title at Kentucky. His Bama teams won six national championships, in 1961, 1964, 1965, 1973, 1978 and 1979. His Bama record included a 25-0 mark in homecoming games. Alabama was 72-2 in games at Bryant-Denny Stadium (and had a 57game Tuscaloosa winning streak), 68-15-5 at Birmingham's Legion Field. The Alabama teams of 1977-80 were the first in NCAA history to win 44 games in four years. His Bama squads made 24 consecutive bowl trips, including seven Sugar Bowls, five Orange Bowls, four Cotton Bowls, four Liberty Bowls, two Bluebonnet Bowls and one Gator Bowl.

Bryant was named National Coach of the Year in 1961, 1971 and 1973. He was inducted into the National Football Foundation and Hall of Fame when first eligible in 1983. He was SEC Coach of the Year ten times, nine at Alabama, and was selected as the SEC Coach of the 20th Century.

Of his 25 Alabama teams, 13 won ten or more games. In addition to the national championships, Alabama finished in the nation's top ten an astonishing 19 times under Bryant.

It's no wonder that a core of college football fans still revere him, that the Bryant Museum on the campus of The University of Alabama draws

thousands of visitors each year, and that books are still written about him.

But Alabama has a history of over 80 years of excellent football in addition to the Bryant years, much of it based on Rose Bowl success under Wallace Wade and Frank Thomas. They preceded Bryant into the College Football Hall

Prior to 1965, the wire services-Associated Press and United Press International-selected the national champion based on regular season play. Alabama won the 1964 national championship, but then lost to Texas in a controversial Orange Bowl when officials determined Tide quarterback Joe Namath did not get across the goalline in the final moments.

The next year the AP announced with great pomposity that it would now include bowl game results in its national championship determination. That proved to be a great stroke of luck for Alabama. And the Tide took advantage of the opportunity.

When LSU upset number two Arkansas in the Cotton Bowl and UCLA defeated number one Michigan State in the Rose Bowl, that made the Orange Bowl-played in prime time-the national championship game with Alabama vs. Nebraska.

Alabama was far more dominating than the final score of 39-28 might suggest, and the Tide was voted number one.

The next year, in deference to Notre Dame, which did not go to bowl games in those days, the AP reversed field and decided it would crown its national champion based on regular season play only. Notre Dame played to a 10-10 tie with Michigan State, a cowardly plan that would have brought ridicule to any team other than the Fighting Irish, but which brought the national championship to Notre Dame. Meanwhile, Alabama was sailing through an undefeated, untied season that culminated with a meaningless (insofar as the national championship was concerned) 34-7 Sugar Bowl win over Nebraska.

Alabama's next national championship bowl game was a great disappointment in an otherwise extraordinary season. In 1971, after back-to-back five-loss seasons, Bryant switched Bama from a pro-style offense to the wishbone. Everyone knows the story of Alabama opening the season against number one USC in Los Angeles and defeating the Trojans, 17-10. From there it was on to an 11-0 regular season, including a 31-7 win over undefeated Auburn at the end of regular season play. That put Alabama number two in the polls and matched against Nebraska in the Orange Bowl.

This time it was Nebraska coming out on top, romping to a 38-6 win and winning the national championship.

While the AP was now firmly committed to a post-bowl poll, UPI continued to award its hardware based on regular season results. In 1973 that meant undefeated Alabama was UPI's national champion. But to win all the other national championship awards, including the more widely-recognized AP title, Alabama would have to defeat Notre Dame in the Sugar Bowl.

Alabama and Bryant's first game against Notre Dame was considered the game of all time, and the contest lived up to its billing. Both teams were excellent and the Irish won the game with a gutsy and successful play. Backed up to their goalline and facing third and long, quarterback Tom Clements passed to tight end Robin Weber and Weber made his only reception of the year, a 35-yard gain that enabled Notre Dame to salt away a 24-23 decision.

For decades, that game film has been the most requested from the Sugar Bowl. It supplanted the previous most-requested, Duke's 29-26 win over Bama's valiant War Babies on January 1, 1945.

Alabama thought it had turned a highly-publicized Sugar Bowl victory into another national championship at the end of the 1977 season. The Tide was ranked third going into the bowl games and Texas was number one. Alabama and Bryant, the winningest coach in the nation at the time, was going against Ohio State and Woody Hayes, who was second to Bryant in victories.

Alabama rolled to a 35-6 win and 11-1 record. The lone loss had been by a touchdown to Nebraska in Lincoln early in the year and the Crimson Tide had defeated number one ranked Southern Cal in Los Angeles. And when fifthranked Notre Dame—which had lost during the year to a woeful Ole Miss—defeated number one Texas, it was thought that the Crimson Tide would be number one.

But the power of Notre Dame among national media is strong, and the Irish poll vaulted Alabama in one of the closest and most controversial votes in history.

It is often pointed out that Alabama came close to the so-called Three-Peat twice. Bama's 1966 team was denied by a blemished Notre Dame, and the Tide's 1977 team—which would be followed by national championship squads in 1978 and 1979—was also edged by the Fighting Irish in AP voting.

In 1978, Alabama fought back from a loss to Southern Cal to rise to number two in the nation. That put Bama and Bryant against another traditional power, Penn State, and another legendary coach, Joe Paterno, in the Sugar Bowl.

ALABAMA BOWL HISTORY

				FINAL AP
	N BOWL	RESULT	RECORD	RANK
1925	1926 Rose	UA 20, Washington 19	10-0-0	N/A
1926	1927 Rose	UA 7, Stanford 7	9-0-1	N/A
1930	1931 Rose	UA 24, Washington State 0	10-0-0	N/A
1934	1935 Rose	UA 29, Stanford 13	10-0-0	N/A
1937	1938 Rose	California 13, UA 0	9-1-0	4
1941	1942 Cotton	UA 29, Texas A&M 21	9-2-0	20
1942	1943 Orange	UA 37, Boston College 21	8-3	10
1944	1945 Sugar	Duke 29, UA 26	5-2-2	NR
1945	1946 Rose	UA 34, Southern Cal 14	10-0-0	
1947	1948 Sugar	Texas 27, UA 7	8-3	6
1952	1953 Orange	UA 61, Syracuse 6	10-2	9
1953	1954 Cotton	Rice 28, UA 6	6-3-3	13
1959	1959 Liberty	Penn State 7, UA 0	7-2-2	10
1960	1960 Bluebonnet	UA 3, Texas 3	8-1-2	9
1961	1962 Sugar	UA 10, Arkansas 3	11-0-0	1
1962	1963 Orange	UA 17, Oklahoma 0	10-1-0	6
1963	1964 Sugar	UA 12, Mississippi 7	9-2-0	8
1964	1965 Orange	Texas 21, UA 17	10-1-0	1
1965	1966 Orange	UA 39, Nebraska 28	9-1-1	1
1966	1967 Sugar	UA 34, Nebraska 7	11-0-0	3
1967	1968 Cotton	Texas A&M 20, UA 16	8-2-1	8
1968	1968 Gator	Missouri 35, UA 10	8-3-0	17
1969	1969 Liberty	Colorado 47, UA 33	6-5-0	NR
1970	1970 Bluebonnet	UA 24, Oklahoma 24	6-5-1	NR
1971	1972 Orange	Nebraska 38, UA 6	11-1-0	4
1972	1973 Cotton	Texas 17, UA 13	10-2-0	7
1973	1973 Sugar	Notre Dame 24, UA 23	11-1-0	4
1974	1975 Orange	Notre Dame 13, UA 11	11-1-0	5
1975	1975 Sugar	UA 13, Penn State 6	11-1-0	3
1976	1976 Liberty	UA 36, UCLA 6	9-3-0	11
1977	1978 Sugar	UA 35, Ohio State 6	11-1-0	2
1978	1979 Sugar	UA 14, Penn State 7	11-1-0	1
1979	1980 Sugar	UA 24, Arkansas 9	12-0-0	1
1980	1981 Cotton	UA 30, Baylor 2	10-2-0	6
1981	1982 Cotton	Texas 14, UA 12	9-2-1	7
1982	1982 Liberty	UA 21, Illinois 15	8-4-0	NR
1983	1983 Sun	UA 28, SMU 7	8-4-0	15
1985	1985 Aloha	UA 24, Southern Cal 3	9-2-1	13
1986	1986 Sun	UA 28, Washington 6	10-3-0	9
1987	1988 Hall Of Fame	Michigan 28, UA 24	7-5-0	NR
1988	1988 Sun	UA 29, Army 28	9-3-0	17
1989	1990 Sugar	Miami 33, UA 25	10-2-0	9
1990	1991 Fiesta	Louisville 34, UA 7	7-5-0	NR
1991	1991 Blockbuster	UA 30, Colorado 25	11-1-0	5
1992	1993 Sugar	UA 34, Miami 13	13-0-0	1
1993	1993 Gator	UA 24, North Carolina 10	9-3-1	14
1994	1995 Citrus	UA 24, Ohio State 17	12-1	5
1996	1997 Outback	UA 17, Michigan 14	10-3	11
1998	1998 Music City	Virginia Tech 38, UA 7	7-5	NR
1999	2000 Orange	Michigan 35, UA 34 (OT)	10-3	8
2001	2001 Independence	UA 14, Iowa State 13	7-5	NR
2004	2004 Music City	Minnesota 20, UA 16	6-6	NR
2005	2006 Cotton Bowl	UA 13, Texas Tech 10	10-2	8
2006		Oklahoma State 34, UA 31	6-7	NR
2000	2500 maspendence bowl	Olamona State 54, 64 51		****

Undefeated, untied Bama teams winning major bowl games and some form of National Championship

Anyone who saw the game remembers it as one of the most tense imaginable, every play seemingly the play that would mean the difference between victory and defeat. And most remember the fourth down play of Penn State at the Alabama goalline as that play. Alabama held three times at the one-yard line and Bama's 14-7 win was good for the national title.

There wasn't much drama as Alabama repeated in 1979. The Tide moved into the number one spot after a 40-0 win over Florida in Gainesville early in the season and went on to an undefeated season, outscoring opponents 383-

67, including an easy 24-9 win over Lou Holtz's Arkansas Razorbacks in the Sugar Bowl.

Alabama has had only one national championship bowl opportunity since, and it was a great one from a Crimson Tide standpoint. Coach Gene Stallings 1992 Bama was a heavy underdog to Miami, featuring Heisman Trophy winning quarterback Gino Toretta. But the Tide had a defense, and Bama used it to overwhelm the Hurricanes, 34-13, completing a 13-0 season and bringing more national championship hardware to Tuscaloosa.

What a tradition.

BY THE NUMBERS

ALL-TIME SOUTHEASTERN CONFERENCE STANDINGS

School	Years	Games	Won-Lost-Tied	Pct.	
ALABAMA	73	512	*337-155-20	.678	
Tennessee	73	472	*302-151-19	.660	
Georgia	74	472	277-183-14	.599	
LSU	73	469	262-193-22	.572	
Florida	73	455	251-189-15	.568	
Auburn	73	483	269-204-18	.566	
Mississippi	73	469	232-222-15	.511	
Arkansas	15	120	*57-612	.483	
South Carolina	15	120	*46-73-1	.388	
Mississippi State	73	478	*153-312-13	.334	
Kentucky	73	471	144-315-12	.318	
Vanderbilt	72	479	*112-349-18	.253	
Former Members					
Georgia Tech	31	194	115-70-9	.616	
Tulane	33	195	69-113-13	.387	
Sewanee	8	37	0-37-0	.000	

SEC CHAMPIONSHIPS BY SCHOOLS

ALABAMA-21 ('33-34t-37-45-53-61t-64-65-66t-71-72-73-74-75-77-78-79-81t-89t-92-99)

Tennessee-13 ('38-39t-40-46t-51t-56-67-69-85-89t-90-97-98)

Georgia-12 ('42-46t-48-59-66t-68-76t-80-81t-82-02-05)

LSU-9 ('35-36-38-61t-70-86-88t-01-03)

Florida-7 ('91-93-94-95-96-00-06)

Ole Miss-6 ('47-54-55-60-62-63)

Auburn-6 ('57-83-87-88t-89t-04)

@Georgia Tech-5 ('39t-43-44-51t-52)

@Tulane-3 ('34-39t-49)

Kentucky-2 ('50-76t)

Mississippi State-1 ('41)

Vanderbilt-0

Arkansas-0

South Carolina-0

@Sewanee-0

@Denotes former member of SEC

ALL-TIME WINNINGEST SCHOOLS

	Team	W	L	T	Pct.
1.	Michigan	860	282	36	.745
2.	Notre Dame	821	269	42	.744
3.	Texas	813	310	33	.718
4.	Ohio State	786	302	53	.712
5.	Oklahoma	766	294	53	.712
6.	ALABAMA	*780	308	43	.708
7.	Nebraska	810	326	40	.706
8.	Southern Cal	743	301	54	.701
9.	Tennessee	*768	322	55	.695
10.	Penn State	780	343	42	.688

ALL-TIME BOWL VICTORIES

1.	ALABAMA	30
2.	Southern Cal	29
3.	Penn State	25
4.	Oklahoma	24
	Tennessee	24
6.	Georgia	23
	Texas	23
8.	Nebraska	22
	Georgia Tech	22
10.	Florida State	20
11.	Mississippi	19
	LSU	19
13.	Michigan	18
	Ohio State	18
	Miami	18
	Auburn	18

ALL-TIME BOWL APPEARANCES

1.	ALABAMA	54
2.	Texas	46
	Tennessee	46
4.	Southern Cal	45
5.	Nebraska	44
6.	Georgia	42
7.	Oklahoma	40
8.	Penn State	39
9.	LSU	38
	Ohio State	38
	Michigan	38
12.	Arkansas	35
	Georgia Tech	35
	Florida State	35
15	Florida	34

ALL-TIME WINS

ALL	TITALE ANTHAD	
1.	Michigan	860
2.	Notre Dame	821
3.	Texas	813
4.	Nebraska	810
5.	Ohio State	786
6.	ALABAMA	*780
	Penn State	780
8.	Tennessee	*768
9.	Oklahoma	766
10.	Southern Cal	743
11.	Georgia	702
12.	LSU	680
13.	Syracuse	669
14.	Auburn	668
15.	West Virginia	653
	2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.	 Michigan Notre Dame Texas Nebraska Ohio State ALABAMA Penn State Tennessee Oklahoma Southern Cal Georgia LSU Syracuse Auburn

*Includes 8 on-the-field Alabama victories and 1 tie listed as losses from 1993 season, games the NCAA forced Alabama to forfeit.



2007 TENTATIVE SEC FOOTBALL SCHEDULE



(Dates and Sites Subject to Change - As of April 25, 2007)

VAN	TEN	SOUTH	MISS. STATE	OLE	LSU	KEN	GEO	FLORIDA	AUBURN	ARK	ALAI	Date Team
VANDERBILT	TENNESSEE	SOUTH CAROLINA	EF 55	OLE MISS		KENTUCKY	GEORGIA	ADA	URN	ARKANSAS	ALABAMA	te am
RICHMOND Nashville	CALIFORNIA Berkeley	LAFAYETTE Columbia	LSU Starkville (Aug. 30)	MEMPHIS Memphis	MISS. STATE Starkville (Aug. 30)	EASTERN KENTUCKY Lexington	OKLAHOMA STATE Athens	WESTERN KENTUCKY Gainesville	KANSAS STATE Auburn	TROY Fayetteville	WESTERN CAROLINA Tuscaloosa	Sept. 1
ALABAMA Nashville	SOUTHERN MISS Knoxville	GEORGIA Athens	TULANE New Orleans	MISSOURI Oxford	VIRGINIA TECH Baton Rouge	KENT STATE Lexington	SOUTH CAROLINA Athens	TROY Gainesville	SOUTH FLORIDA Auburn		VANDERBILT Nashville	Sept. 8
Nashville	FLORIDA Gainesville	SO. CAROLINA STATE Columbia	AUBURN Auburn	VANDERBILT Nashville	MIDDLE TENNESSEE Baton Rouge	Lexington Lexington	WESTERN CAROLINA Athens	TENNESSEE Gainesville	MISSISSIPPI STATE Auburn	ALABAMA Tuscaloosa	ARKANSAS Tuscaloosa	Sept. 15
	ARKANSAS STATE Knoxville	LSU Baton Rouge	GARDNER- WEBB Starkville	FLORIDA Oxford	SOUTH CAROLINA Baton Rouge	ARKANSAS Fayetteville	ALABAMA Tuscaloosa	Oxford Oxford	NEW MEXICO STATE Auburn	KENTUCKY Fayetteville	GEORGIA Tuscaloosa	Sept. 22
EASTERN MICHIGAN Nashville		MISSISSIPPI STATE Columbia	SOUTH CAROLINA Columbia	GEORGIA Athens	TULANE New Orleans	FLORIDA ATLANTIC Lexington	OLE MISS Athens	AUBURN Gainesville	FLORIDA Gainesville	NORTH TEXAS Fayetteville	FLORIDA STATE Jacksonville	Sept. 29
AUBURN Auburn	GEORGIA Knoxville	KENTUCKY Columbia (Oct. 4)	UAB Starkville	LOUISIANA TECH Oxford	FLORIDA Baton Rouge	SO. CAROLINA Columbia (Oct. 4)	TENNESSEE Knoxville	LSU Baton Rouge	VANDERBILT Aubum	CHATTANOOGA Little Rock	HOUSTON Tuscaloosa	Oct. 6
GEORGIA Nashville	MISSISSIPPI STATE Starkville	NORTH CAROLINA Chapel Hill	TENNESSEE Starkville	ALABAMA Oxford	KENTUCKY Lexington	LSU Lexington	VANDERBILT Nashville		ARKANSAS Fayetteville	AUBURN Fayetteville	OLE MISS Oxford	0ct. 13
SOUTH CAROLINA Columbia	ALABAMA Tuscaloosa	VANDERBILT Columbia	WEST VIRGINIA Morgantown	ARKANSAS Oxford	AUBURN Baton Rouge	FLORIDA Lexington		KENTUCKY Lexington	LSU Baton Rouge	OLE MISS Oxford	TENNESSEE Tuscaloosa	Oct. 20
MIAMI (OHIO) Nashville	SOUTH CAROLINA Knoxville	TENNESSEE Knoxville	KENTUCKY Lexington	AUBURN Auburn		MISSISSIPPI STATE Lexington	FLORIDA Jacksonville	GEORGIA Jacksonville	OLE MISS Auburn	FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL Fayetteville		0ct. 27
FLORIDA Gainesville	LOUISIANA- LAFAYETTE Knoxville	ARKANSAS Fayetteville		NORTHWESTERN STATE Oxford	ALABAMA Tuscaloosa		TROY Athens	VANDERBILT Gainesville	TEUNESSEE Aubum Aubum	SOUTH CAROLINA Fayetteville	LSU Tuscaloosa	Nov. 3
KENTUCKY Nashville	ARKANSAS Knoxville	FLORIDA Columbia	ALABAMA Starkville		LOUISIANA TECH Baton Rouge	VANDERBILT Nashville	AUBURN Athens	SOUTH CAROLINA Columbia	GEORGIA Athens	TENNESSEE Knoxville	MISSISSIPPI STATE Starkville	Nov. 10
TENNESSEE Knoxville	VANDERBILT Knoxville		ARKANSAS Little Rock	LSU Oxford	OLE MISS Oxford	GEORGIA Athens	KENTUCKY Athens	FLORIDA ATLANTIC Gainesville		MISSISSIPPI STATE Little Rock	LOUISIANA- MONROE Tuscaloosa	Nov. 17
WAKE FOREST Nashville	KENTUCKY Lexington	CLEMSON Columbia	OLE MISS Starkville (Nov. 23)	MISS. STATE Starkville (Nov. 23)	ARKANSAS Baton Rouge (Nov. 23)	TENNESSEE Lexington	GEORGIA TECH Atlanta	FLORIDA STATE Gainesville	ALABAMA Auburn	LSU Baton Rouge (Nov. 23)	AUBURN Aubum	Nov. 24



2007 SEC CHAMPIONSHIP GAME • DECEMBER 1 • ATLANTA, GA.



FOOTBALL BY SCOUT MEDIA

STILL ON TOP

With five league teams winning a national football title in the past 15 years, the Southeastern Conference champion is always a legitimate BCS Championship Game candidate

fter Florida and LSU posted identical 41-14 victories in the BCS national championship game and the Sugar Bowl, the SEC once again laid solid claim to being the strongest conference in college football. While the Gators head into the 2007 season as the defending national champions, they have a long, tough road ahead to defend their SEC title before they can even consider a national title repeat like their basketball counterparts.

The overall depth from top to bottom in the SEC East makes it the toughest division in any football league in America. And with LSU and Auburn heading up an extremely competitive Western Division, the SEC title chase figures to be another week-by-week struggle to find the title-game matchup for Dec. 1 in Atlanta.

Scout.com went to its experts at each of the 12 SEC schools to gather post-spring practice outlooks for all the league squads, while also polling our writers to determine their picks to win the division and overall league titles.

The teams are previewed in order of their predicted division finish with first-place votes in parentheses.

SEC EASTERN DIVISION

1. TENNESSEE (6 FIRST-PLACE VOTES) By Randy Moore Rocky Top News

Fielding three new secondary starters can be troublesome. Fielding three new secondary starters without a proven pass rush can be a recipe for disaster. But that's the situation facing the Tennessee Vols this fall.

Except for senior All-America candidate Jonathan Hefney at free safety, Tennessee will be frightfully inexperienced in the defensive backfield. The other first-teamers-sophomore Marsalous Johnson, junior Antonio Gaines and senior Jarod Parrish-combined for just 11 tackles and one pass breakup last season. They'll be challenged in August by incoming junior college transfers DeAngelo Willingham and Nevin McKenzie, plus Eric Berry, rated the



Chris Graythen/Getty Images

number one high school cornerback prospect in America last fall.

A strong pass rush could take some pressure off of the youthful defensive backs but the 2006 Vols recorded just 17 sacks, the program's lowest total since 1988.

Rising senior Jonathan Mapu and junior Demonte Bolden will assume the tackle spots manned in '06 by NFL Draft picks Justin Harrell and Turk McBride. Xavier Mitchell and Antonio Reynolds return for another year as the first-team ends but they combined for just five sacks last season.

Given the shaky outlook in the front four and secondary, the Vols are fortunate to be loaded at linebacker. Jerod Mayo is an All-SEC candidate at middle linebacker after starting on the weakside in 2006. Ryan Karl is back for a second year as the first-team strongside linebacker. Flashy sophomore Rico McCoy assumes Mayo's old spot.

Offensively, Tennessee will be looking to recapture the form it showed in the first half of 2006. After scoring 211 points (35 per game) in the first six outings, the Vols limped to the finish line, scoring just 151 points (22 per game) in the last seven outings.

Tennessee's 2006 attack was built around receivers Robert Meachem, Jayson Swain and Bret Smith. None will be back in '07, so the Vols must rely on unproven returnees such as Lucas Taylor, Josh Briscoe, Austin Rogers and Quintin Hancock. They combined for just 26 catches, 252 yards and zero touchdowns last fall. Junior college transfer Kenny O'Neal and prep school grad Brent Vinson will get every opportunity to win jobs in preseason.

Unless the Vols can pinpoint some capable receivers, they'll be wasting one of the NCAA's premier quarterbacks. Rising senior Erik Ainge completed 67 percent of his passes for 2,989 yards and 19 touchdowns in 2006 with just nine interceptions.

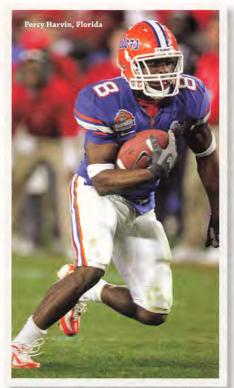
Regardless of what happens with the wideouts, Ainge will have excellent weapons at tight end and running back.

Seniors Chris Brown (6-3, 250) and Brad Cottam (6-8, 270) should be as good as any tight-end tandem in college football. Meanwhile, the running corps consists of Arian Foster (10 career starts), Montario Hardesty (five starts) and LaMarcus Coker (four starts). All are quality players who have been injury prone.

Four-year starting placekicker James Wilhoit is gone but All-America candidate Britton Colquitt is back for his third year as the punter. He may assume the kicking chores.

2. FLORIDA (3) By Chris Chmielenski Fightin' Gators Magazine

As spring practice began in Gainesville, confidence was low. Urban Meyer portrayed his defending national champions in two simple words—"train wreck." How would the defense rebound after losing nine starters? Was Tim Tebow capable of running the offense on every down?



Stephen Dunn, Getty Images

The offense proved to not only be fine, but potent. It is loaded with firepower that will operate behind an experienced offensive line. The front five lost one starter, so senior guard Drew Miller moved to center. After struggling in the first few weeks of practice, Miller had the role down by the Orange and Blue Game.

At receiver, senior Andre Caldwell returned for his senior season and has been moved to the outside after lining up in the slot. Sophomore Percy Harvin takes over the slot role, and will be the go-to-guy. Junior Cornelius Ingram proved this spring that he can be a big-time SEC performer. The converted quarterback to tight end showed he's more comfortable with his role.

Wideouts Louis Murphy and David Nelson also emerged as strong options for the Gators, and early entrant Aaron Hernandez, who was the top high school tight end last year, also had a great spring.

After Chris Leak's departure, Tebow eagerly stepped in as the leader of the offense and proved he can be the dual-threat quarterback that everyone expected him to be. He completed 17-of-27 passes for 216 yards in the spring game while tossing three touchdowns.

In the end, the only true problem for the Gator offense is in the backfield. Sophomore Mon Williams emerged as an early favorite, but suffered an ACL tear in his knee that will sideline him in 2007. Junior Kestahn Moore became a more powerful back and showed that his field vision has improved and is the frontrunner for the starting job.

The defense improved during the spring, but there is still a long way to go. On a positive note, the line returns junior Derrick Harvey at



Scott Halleran, Getty Images

defensive end, who put up huge numbers in the BCS title game against Ohio State. Sophomore Jermaine Cunningham solidified the other end spot, and redshirt senior Clint McMillan and redshirt junior Javier Estopinan will fill the middle with sophomore Brandon Antwine.

The linebacking corps is completely new, but highly regarded. Sophomore Brandon Spikes takes over the Mike spot left vacant by Brandon Siler. Spikes is a big, physical player who will eventually take over the leadership role on defense. Redshirt sophomore Ryan Stamper came into his own, earning a starting spot and sophomores Dustin Doe and redshirt freshman A.J. Jones will also contribute.

The secondary has to deal with the loss of All-America Reggie Nelson at free safety, but strong safety Tony Joiner is back for his senior season. Joiner has the maturity and patience to work well with his younger surrounding cast and with senior Kyle Jackson, the safety positions will be solid.

The cornerback position dealt with some lingering injuries, but by the Orange and Blue Game, a couple of players proved they can handle the job. Redshirt junior Markus Manson moved from tailback to cornerback and adjusted nicely. Sophomores Markihe Anderson and Wondy Pierre-Louis also had strong springs, but they could be pushed by true freshman Joe Haden.

The kicking game will feature two new kickers, with incoming freshman Chas Henry expected to replace Eric Wilbur at punter and several players battling for the placekicking role.

The schedule is highlighted by a trip to Baton Rouge to face LSU, but home games against Tennessee and Auburn in The Swamp, where Meyer has yet to lose a game in 14 tries,

SEC PREDICTIONS EASTERN DIVISION Florida (3) 3. Georgia 4. South Carolina 5. Kentucky 6. Vanderbilt WESTERN DIVISION L. LSU (11) 2. Auburn (1) 3. Arkansas 4. Alabama 5. Mississippi State 6. Mississippi SEC Champion: LSU Biggest Surprise: Georgia Biggest Disappointment: Arkansas Offensive Player-of-the-Year: Darren McFadden, Arkansas Defensive Player-of-the-Year:

should give the Gators a legitimate chance to defend their SEC East title and challenge for another league crown.

3. GEORGIA (2) By Dean Legge Dawg Post

Glenn Dorsey, LSU

Georgia's 2007 spring practices were a lot less dramatic than last season's. Matthew Stafford, who was one of four quarterbacks fighting it out for the starting spot last year, had the starting job locked up. The top issue going forward is the offensive line.

The Bulldogs will have three new starters in their front five—one a true freshman. While the group came together well during spring ball, starting a true freshman at tackle is a glaring concern. Still, Chester Adams, Chris Davis, Fernando Velasco, Scott Haverkamp and true freshman Trinton Sturdivant held their own against Georgia's defensive line, but it could take a little time to mesh considering their inexperience dealing with each other and new offensive line coach Stacy Searles.

Georgia returns nearly all of its skill position players on offense. Running back Kregg Lumpkin will have to hold off Thomas Brown, who was the starter before tearing his ACL last year, and upand-comer Knowshon Moreno. Brown did not practice during the spring, but has all but been cleared for the fall. Moreno looks like the future at running back. He had a very good spring, and it's hard to imagine he won't get his fair share of carries in the fall.

Georgia has never had a lack of talent at receiver, but has had a lack of production. At some point this group, led by starters Mikey

Henderson and Mohammed Massaquoi, will have to be consistent in order for Georgia to be able to win the SEC. A.J. Bryant, Kenneth Harris and Kris Durham, like Massaquoi and Henderson, are all capable of being game breakers—now they need to show it. It appears Tripp Chandler will replace Martrez Milner at starting tight end, but none of the other tight ends participated in the spring because they were hurt.

The name of the game for the Bulldogs since Mark Richt took over has been defense. While the Dawgs lose two outstanding defensive ends and good linebackers, the defense will be as fast as ever and may surprise some in the conference.

Finding out who will replace the departed defensive ends may take some time. Marcus Howard and Roderick Battle, listed as the starters, are both small for SEC-level ends. Look for Jarius Wynn to make a push into the starting lineup at some time during the year; Kiante Trip could surprise, too.

Georgia's interior defensive line will be stout this year as starters Kade Weston and Jeff Owens provide the anchor for that unit. But those two could be replaced by several capable backups, including Gino Atkins, Corvey Irvin, Brandon Wood and Ricardo Crawford. That group forms one of the bigger defensive lines in the SEC.

Look for the Dawgs' linebackers to be much faster this season. Akeem Dent made an impact this spring and is listed as a starter at one outside spot. Darius Dewberry is listed opposite him, with former outside linebacker Brandon Miller starting in the middle. Miller's production improved tremendously after the move inside.

The secondary may be the best in the SEC. C.J. Byrd is the lone new starter, but played well during spring drills. Byrd and senior Kelin Johnson form the type of hard-hitting safety combination the conference has been used to seeing from Georgia over the last few years. They, however, don't hit as hard as their backups, Quintin Banks and Reshad Jones. Paul Oliver and Bryan Evans are the starters at the most talented spot for the Dawgs-cornerback. Oliver is an NFL Draft first-round candidate for 2008 while Evans may be the fastest player since Richt took over. Both can cover.

Georgia will have to replace its starting punter, Gordon Ely-Kelso. Placekicking chores will be handled by one of the best in the country, Brandon Coutu.

4. SOUTH CAROLINA By Jonathan Jolley GamecockAnthem.com

With a veteran roster returning and an infusion of young talent from the 2007 recruiting class soon to be on campus, Coach Steve Spurrier believes his South Carolina squad is capable of making some noise in the SEC East race this fall.

Questions still remain on the offensive line and at the wide receiver position. USC must replace the three interior starters and fill the void



Marc Serota, Getty Images

left by All-SEC receiver Sidney Rice's departure to the NFL. The Gamecocks will feature one of the better backfields in the league with fifthyear senior quarterback Blake Mitchell and an experienced running back tandem in Cory Boyd and Mike Davis.

If Carolina can develop some chemistry along the line early on, and find a few receivers to complement returning starter Kenny McKinley, the offense, which averaged more than 450 yards and 32.6 points per game over the final five games of last season, has the potential to build on its success from the end of the 2006 campaign and become one of the top offenses in the SEC.

The South Carolina defense returns nine starters from a unit that surrendered 18.7 points per game a year ago. Led by All-SEC middle linebacker Jasper Brinkley, Freshman All-America defensive end Eric Norwood and a host of athletic newcomers on the defensive line, the Gamecocks figure to improve on their struggles against the run in 2007 and generate more pressure on opposing quarterbacks with what looks to be a much improved pass rush.

Highly-touted freshmen Ladi Ajiboye, Travian Robertson and Clifton Geathers made their presence felt on the defensive front in the spring, and will be joined by 5-star defensive end signee Cliff Matthews in the fall. The USC secondary also looks improved with the return of starting free safety Brandon Isaac from injury, the continued improvement of returning Freshman All-SEC strong safety Emanuel Cook, and the maturation of cornerbacks Carlos Thomas, Stoney Woodson and Captain Munnerlyn during the offseason.

The Gamecocks have featured a bendbut-don't-break style of defense over the past two seasons, but with more depth, experience and playmakers across the board in 2007, defensive coordinator Tyrone Nix will look to get his unit off the field quicker and force more turnovers in an effort to get the ball back to the offense more often.

The Gamecocks will field arguably their deepest and most talented team in recent memory, but with a brutal conference schedule that includes road games at Georgia, LSU, Tennessee and Arkansas, USC will need to win at least two of those contests while holding serve at home if it hopes to contend for its first SEC East crown since joining the league in 1992.

5. KENTUCKY By Larry Vaught Kentucky Sports Report

This is almost virgin territory for the Kentucky football team.

The Wildcats not only are coming off their first bowl victory in 22 years, but they return perhaps the best set of skilled players in the school's history as they try to build on last year's success of winning eight games and beating Clemson in the Music City Bowl.

"We have a lot of players coming back and a lot of expectations. There is no excuse for us not to be better. We have a chance to be really dangerous," senior tight end Jacob Tamme said.

The offense features quarterback Andre Woodson, receivers Keenan Burton and Dicky Lyons, running back Rafael Little and Tamme. All the players are seniors except Lyons, who is the only one not to have earned all-conference honors.

Keeping Woodson healthy obviously will be a huge key because redshirt freshmen Mike Hartline and Will Fidler are not close to being in Woodson's league yet. Woodson has that rare combination of size, power and accuracy that should make him one of the nation's top quarterbacks.

Burton is a game-breaking receiver who probably would have been a third-round draft pick if he had left UK. He's also a dangerous kick returner. Lyons emerged as a reliable receiver last year, especially if teams paid too much attention to Burton. Look for senior Steve Johnson to also play a pivotal role this season. Tamme gives Kentucky a big-play threat at tight end. He's stronger and faster because he's been healthy for a year.

Kentucky has to run the ball better. Little is a dangerous runner and receiver and has capable backups in Tony Dixon and Alfonso Smith, the team's fastest running back.

The offensive line still has questions. Eric Scott, a converted tight end-defensive end, was No. 1 at center in spring practice. Starting guard Christian Williams missed spring practice because of academic reasons. Several other players being counted on were out because of off-season surgeries.

"Our offensive line will battle you and fight you. We have to run the ball better and I have to have more confidence to run the football this year," UK offensive coordinator Joker Phillips said. "Sometimes we get to thinking the only way we can move the football down the field is



Doug Benc, Getty Images

through the air. I have to have confidence we can run if we want to be a better team."

New defensive coordinator Steve Brown inherits a team that ranked last or near the bottom of the SEC in almost every statistical category last year. However, he has experienced players at most positions.

Tackles Myron Pryor and Corey Peters figure to improve and redshirt freshman Ricky Lumpkin was impressive in spring practice.

Leading tackler Wesley Woodyard is back at one linebacker along with Braxton Kelley and Johnny Williams, the other two starting linebackers last year. Kelley figures to be much better after having trouble last year rounding into form because of a 2005 knee injury.

Cornerback Trevard Lindley, the team's biggest surprise, is back to anchor the secondary and UK also has starting safeties Marcus McClinton and Roger Williams back. But the Cats must find another reliable cornerback.

However, Brown is not as worried about pass coverage as he is making tackles and pressuring the passer.

"We have to get rid of blockers and make tackles. There will be a time we are playing against people better than us or bigger than us and we have to be fast and have good technique. If we do, we have a chance to win," Brown said. "But we have to make more plays up front. Our front seven has got to put pressure on the offense."

6. VANDERBILT By Don Yates VandyMania.com

Vanderbilt returns 17 starters from 2006 along with Jeff Jennings, who was the starting tailback in 2005, but sat out 2006 while recovering from an injury. Sixth-year Coach Bobby Johnson's primary goal during spring practice was to develop more depth and it



Andy Lyons, Getty Ima

appears the team accomplished that task.

Offensively Vanderbilt returns starting junior quarterback Chris Nickson, who is a double threat. Nickson passed for 2,085 yards and rushed for 694 during his sophomore campaign. Mackenzi Adams, Richard Kovalcheck and Jared Funk will back him up.

At tailback the Commodores return starter Cassen Jackson-Garrison. Jackson-Garrison started all 12 games in 2006, rushing for 614 yards and five touchdowns. He could be challenged by Jennings who rushed for 448 yards during the 2005 season. Jackson-Garrison is considered more of a breakaway threat while Jennings is more of a reliable short yardage back. Both players looked outstanding during spring drills. Jared Hawkins, Gaston Miller and Kennard Reeves will back up the starter. Hawkins averaged a team leading 6.9 yards a rush on 43 carries during 2006.

Vanderbilt lost wide receiver Marlon White but returns All-Everything Earl Bennett who is on pace to break multiple career SEC receiving records. Bennett caught 82 passes during his sophomore season. George Smith, who is a possession receiver, also returns and caught 21 passes during 2006. Look for speedy Sean Walker to take over White's old position. Walker caught 16 passes in 2006 and rushed for 49 yards in three carries. Bryant Anderson, Alex Washington and Justin Wheeler will serve as backups.

The Commodore offensive line returns all five starters. Senior tackle Brian Stamper was awarded a fifth year of eligibility because of a medical hardship. Stamper and fellow senior tackle Chris Williams could be high draft choices during the 2008 NFL draft. Veteran starters Hamilton Holliday (center), Merritt Kirchoffer (guard) and Josh Eames (guard) also return. Sophomores Thomas Welch (tackle), Ryan Custer

(guard), Bradley Vierling (center), Drew Gardner (guard) and Eric Hensley (tackle) will serve as line backups.

Junior Brad Allen returns at tight end but sophomore Jake Bradford or redshirt freshman Justin Green could challenge him.

Defensively Vanderbilt returns three of four defensive linemen, two of three linebackers and all its secondary.

At strong safety junior Reshard Langford returns to his spot. Langford intercepted three passes during the 2006 season. Sophomore Brent Trice will back him up. Joel Caldwell, who started at cornerback in 2006, was moved to the safety position during the spring.

Sophomore free safety Ryan Hamilton returns to his spot after starting multiple games during 2006. Roger Herndon, who had a diving interception duringthe spring game, could also play at this position.

Sophomore Myron Lewis performed well at cornerback during the spring. The other corner spot will go to returning starter D.J. Moore. Josh Allen and Darlron Spead will both play a lot. Spead had three interceptions during 2006 and Allen was a starter in 2005.

Sophomores Brandon Bryant and Patrick Benoist are the leading candidates to take over Kevin Joyce's outside linebacker spot. All-SEC Jonathan Goff returns at the middle linebacker spot and Marcus Buggs returns on the outside.

Curtis Gatewood, who had seven sacks during 2006, returns at one defensive end position. Quavian Lewis, who was moved to defensive end from linebacker during the spring, looked dominating during the spring game and will likely backup Gatewood.

Steven Stone should start at the other end position, but rugged sophomore Broderick Stewart will get the nod during passing situations. Veteran Theo Horrocks, who had 49 tackles during 2006, returns at one tackle position. Gabe Hall or Greg Billinger will likely play the other tackle spot.

Placekicker Bryant Hahnfeldt and punter Brett Upson both return in 2007.

SEC WEST DIVISION

1. LSU (11, SEC CHAMPION) By Matthew Deville TigerRag.com

Some folks may find it hard to believe the LSU Tigers are favorites to win the SEC Western Division. Some publications even have the Tigers tabbed to win the outright SEC title. With four players taken in the first round of April's NFL Draft, one would have to think LSU is looking at some sort of dropoff.

Not so fast.

Sure enough, the Tigers had four players drafted in the first round, including the number one overall pick in quarterback JaMarcus Russell, but LSU's cupboard is far from bare.

In all the JaMarcus-mania over the last four months, some people might have forgotten about Matt Flynn. Remember Flynn? He led the



Doug Perisinger/Getty Images

Tigers in a 40-3 rout of Miami in the 2005 Peach Bowl. Flynn is ready to lead the Tigers offense after spending the past four years in Russell's shadow.

With the Tigers top two wideouts also taken in the first round, some may ask, to whom will Flynn throw. Look no further than a pair of stud receivers in Early Doucet and Brandon LaFell.

And when the more mobile Flynn isn't throwing it around in Gary Crowton's new offense, look for the LSU senior quarterback to be handing off to the Tigers' three-headed monster at tailback. Keiland Williams and Charles Scott carried the bulk of the load last season as freshmen and will only get better. Keep an eye on the up-and-coming Richard Murphy in 2007.

On the defensive side, All-America tackle Glenn Dorsey leads a unit that is fully loaded. Sure Bo Pelini has to replace both safeties, including All-America and first round pick LaRon Landry, but junior Curtis Taylor projects to be a star.

LSU will have to find a new punter and place kicking specialist as all-everything Chris Jackson will get his shot at the NFL, but Miles has made sure to recruit plenty of specialists in the incoming class.

People got a glimpse of college football's fastest player a year ago in pint-sized Trindon Holliday. Expect more out of Holliday in the return game as well as in certain offensive packages at both running back and receiver.

The Tigers do have some holes to fill along the offensive line, but look for LSU to be right back in the thick of the SEC race. The schedule is favorable for the Tigers in 2007 as LSU has all the big ones within the confines of Tiger Stadium. Virginia Tech, Auburn, Florida and Arkansas all come to Baton Rouge this season. The big one on the road will be a November 3 date with former



Chris Graythen, Getty Images

Coach Nick Saban in Tuscaloosa. Expect that one to draw lots of national attention.

Don't be surprised, though, if Miles and Company are back in Atlanta hoisting that championship trophy come December.

2. AUBURN (1) By Mark Murphy Inside the Auburn Tigers

After posting an 11-2 record that included a Cotton Bowl victory over Nebraska, Auburn is expected to put another strong team on the football field in 2007.

How good the Tigers will be depends on how well Coach Tommy Tuberville and his staff rebuild the offensive line and the kicking game and replace several experienced performers from the 2006 defense.

Brandon Cox, a fifth-year senior, returns for his third season as the starting quarterback. The lefty had a disappointing junior year after suffering ankle and knee injuries in game three against LSU that severely limited his mobility. After a strong spring, Cox looks ready to finish his career as one of the most accurate passers in school history.

Finding a backup quarterback is still an issue. Blake Field, a junior, was limited in the spring by tendonitis in his throwing shoulder and neither redshirt freshmen Neil Caudle nor Steven Ensminger, took command of the number two spot.

The rest of the backfield looks strong with pro prospect Carl Stewart returning at fullback along with a deep and talented group of tailbacks to replace senior Kenny Irons. Junior Brad Lester has starting experience and plenty of moves. Sophomore Ben Tate, redshirt freshman Mario Fannin and junior Tristan Davis were impressive in the spring.

Tuberville is looking for more players to step up at wide receiver where the Tigers will miss record-setting Courtney Taylor. Rod Smith, a was impressive in spring training while redshirt freshmen Tim Hawthorne and Terrell Zachery are players to watch.

The only full-time returning starter on the offensive line is 6-9, 321-pound senior left tackle King Dunlap, but the Tigers have talented players at the other positions. Tyronne Green, playing behind NFL first-round draft choice Ben Grubbs last year, looks ready to blossom as a junior. Jason Bosley, a junior center, has starting experience, as does senior

right guard Leon Hart. Andrew McCain, a 6-6, 300-pound sophomore, stepped up and won the right tackle spot in the spring.

Tight end is a strength with senior Cole Bennett backed up by talented sophomores Tommy Trott and Gabe McKenzie.

Defensively, All-SEC end Quentin Groves returns as a senior and leads what should be a quick and athletic front. Senior Josh Thompson will try to hold off a challenge at noseguard from senior Tez Doolittle while junior Pat Sims will battle promising redshirt freshman Mike Blanc at tackle. Sen'Derrick Marks, a 6-2, 287-pound sophomore, could start at tackle or end.

The Tigers will miss starters Will Herring and Karibi Dede at linebacker, but young players like sophomore Patrick Trahan and Craig Stevens look ready to step into prime-time roles.

The Tigers return three starters in the secondary with senior Eric Brock and sophomore Aairon Savage at the safety spots. Seniors Patrick Lee and Jonathan Wilhite both have starting experience at cornerback where the Tigers lost David Irons.

AU must replace four-year starters John Vaughn (field goals) and Kody Bliss (punter). Ryan Shoemaker will likely be the punter. Four candidates, including highly-regarded signee Wes Byrum, will compete for the kicking job.

Overall, Tuberville has a team with plenty of depth, speed and good experience despite losing more than 20 seniors and it will be a surprise if the Tigers don't challenge for the SEC West title. A key to success will be overcoming a schedule that features road tests at Florida, LSU, Arkansas and Georgia.

3. ARKANSAS By Clay Henry Hawgs Illustated

A football adage goes something like this: all things being relatively equal, the team with the best tackles wins.

That might be the problem for the 2007 Arkansas football team. The Hogs may have lost all four starting tackles from last year's 7-1 SEC West champs.

Offensive tackles Tony Ugoh and Zac Tubbs graduated, as did inspirational defensive tackle Keith Jackson. Marcus Harrison, the other starting defensive tackle, still has a year of eligibility, but he tore up a knee in the



Ronald Martinez, Getty Images

spring. Harrison should return in the fall after undergoing ACL surgery in April.

Still, this Arkansas team may boast some of the SEC's top talent. No one in the league can match the offensive backfield the Hogs have with Darren McFadden, Felix Jones, Michael Smith and Peyton Hillis. The offensive line must be rebuilt, but there is at least an anchor.

All-SEC center Jonathan Luigs seemed to excel as new offensive coordinator David Lee installed 18 various pass protections he brought from his last gig, the Dallas Cowboys.

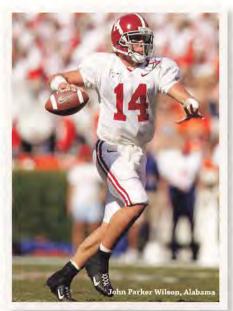
The Hogs didn't do much with the running game in the spring. Lee threw out the old passing game playbook in favor of something similar to what the Cowboys and Colts of the NFL ran last year. That doesn't mean the Hogs will be pass happy in '07, but they should be improved with Lee's system featuring option routes based on coverage reads.

Casey Dick will be the quarterback. If he is only average, the Hogs could be spectacular on offense. If he is below that, the Hogs might spend more time than last year in what was called the Wildcat Package featuring McFadden as the shotgun quarterback.

Hillis seems to be the key in the backfield. He was the missing ingredient down the stretch. He sustained a season-ending thigh bruise against Tennessee and the Hogs were not the same the rest of the way. He was and is the Hogs' third-down back and the best blocker for McFadden.

Back to the tackles. On offense the replacements are Jose Valdez on the left side and Nate Garner on the right. Valdez played most of the bowl game when Ugoh was injured, with solid results. Garner has started before and was solid in the spring.

Defensively, the Hogs were thin at tackle and started a walk-on at one slot in the spring game. Harrison is expected to return in early September, but remains a question mark. Ernest



Marc Serota Getty Imac

Mitchell and Fred Bledsoe were outstanding in the spring as the regular tackles.

Elsewhere on defense, the Hogs lost their key playmakers in Jackson, end Jamaal Anderson, outside linebacker Sam Olajubutu and cornerback Chris Houston. Coordinator Reggie Herring likes the young talent being plugged into those holes, but knows it is going to take time to get things to mesh.

"We do have a nice blend of experience and youthful talent and we will be fine in time." Herring said.

Defensive end Malcolm Sheppard, nicknamed "The Wood," will take Anderson's spot and is destined for stardom. Jerell Norton will take Houston's cornerback spot and may be as talented as any corner the Hogs have ever had.

Young linebackers Ryan Powers, Chip Gregory and Wendell Davis have SEC speed. Herring thinks that group will be solid before the season's end.

The kicking game might be the biggest question mark. There is hope incoming freshman Alex Tejada will give some stability at placekicker. Jeremy Davis, last year's placekicker, will have to handle punting chores, something he did two years ago before Jacob Skinner, now graduated, won the job.

The return game may be the nation's best. The Hogs promise to use both McFadden and Jones as kickoff return men. It's going to be tougher to avoid one of them since kickoffs have been moved back to the 30-yard line. The Hogs are going to use the twin punt return formation, perhaps with McFadden there, too.

4. ALABAMA By Mitch Dobbs 'Bama Magazine

New Alabama Coach Nick Saban is best known for his defensive background, but the offensive side is where the potential lies for Alabama. The Crimson Tide has experience and talent on offense, directed for the second year by junior quarterback John Parker Wilson. Bama's back-up quarterback race will be among true freshman Nick Fanuzzi, redshirt freshman Greg McElroy, who was the back-up in the spring, and sophomore Jimmy Barnes, who missed the spring after ACL knee surgery.

Wilson set single-season school passing records in his first year as a starter, combining with senior-to-be DJ Hall, who broke several Alabama receiving records. Hall is complemented by senior deep threat receiver Keith Brown and experienced role players like senior Matt Caddell, juniors Nikita Stover and Will Oakley, and promising young talent Mike McCoy and Earl Alexander. Tyrone Prothro will miss a second season due to injury.

In true sophomore Andre Smith, the Crimson Tide has its best left tackle since Chris Samuels led the squad to an SEC title in 1999, and in Antoine Caldwell its best center since Dwight Stephenson was All-America. Both guard spots return the starter from a year ago, and the right tackle position has been shored up by the emergence of sophomore Mike Johnson, who moved over from guard when returning starter Chris Capps missed the spring with a shoulder injury.

Alabama also has plenty of talented, if unproven, running backs. Freshman Terry Grant is a speedster Saban sees in the mold of former LSU running back Domanick Davis, and he's looking for either sophomores Glen Coffee and Roy Upchurch, junior Jimmy Johns or freshman Jamar Taylor to complement Grant's speed and elusiveness with a powerful, straightahead back.

Junior Travis McCall is among the best blocking tight ends in the league, and has developed better receiving skills. He was a costarter with junior Nick Walker, the better receiver, last season. Freshman Preston Dial also came on in the spring.

No fullbacks figure to be one of the Tide's best 11 on offense, so look for Alabama to alternate between spreading the field with receivers and using multiple tight ends, with a fair amount of one-back formations under young offensive coordinator Major Applewhite.

We'll find out if Saban really is a defensive genius by what he does with this year's depththin unit. The first 11 are mostly average, and depth is especially poor in the front seven. New starters must be found at defensive tackle, two linebacker spots, corner and safety. And those departures are what was left over from Alabama's talent-loaded 2005 squad, which produced three NFL Rookie-of-the-Year candidates.

Redshirt freshman Bryan Motley was Bama's best defensive tackle in the spring, and senior end Wallace Gilberry, junior end Bobby Greenwood, and sophomore linebacker Prince Hall are the only three experienced players at their positions. Simeon Castille is by far the Tide's best defensive player, and a proven playmaker in the defensive backfield. He will

have to take some gambles that pay off for the Tide to hold opponents out of the end zone. New starters have to be found.

Alabama could be dangerous on returns with Grant and return specialist Javier Arenas deep. Arenas returned a punt for a touchdown against Oklahoma State in the Independence Bowl, and Grant was his equal in ability before going out with an injury early in the season. Alabama's placekickers are more than capable, despite an aberration last year that cost 'Bama the Arkansas game, and punter P.J. Fitzgerald looks more consistent in his second year on the job.

5. MISSISSIPPI STATE By David Murray Dawgs Bite Magazine

Coach Sylvester Croom still emphasizes intangibles. But after three seasons of changing attitudes at Mississippi State he also sees more aptitude on the 2007 roster.

"The potential is there to do some good things," Croom said after spring camp. "How good I don't know because I don't know exactly how good are the other teams in our conference. But I know we're a lot better than we have been."

Actually the 2006 Bulldogs were better than a 3-9 record. The season turned, twice, on identical injuries to quarterback Mike Henig in the first and 11th games. Healthy, Henig moved the pro-style offense even without proven backs and mature blockers. Now the fourth-year junior has both to work with and some big-play receivers.

"Mike throws the ball extremely well," Croom said, "he's improved on his drops and his mechanics."

Henig also had backup competition with January transfer Josh Riddell fitting into State's system quickly.

Anthony Dixon earned the halfback job as a rookie and expands his resume this season with some fullback duty so newcomers Marcus Green or Robert Elliot get a chance to run.

"Whoever it turns out, our top four backs are going to be pretty good," Croom said.

The catching corps looked even better as transfer Brandon McRae jumped to first-team at weak-side wideout, and Jamayel Smith moved to strong-side.

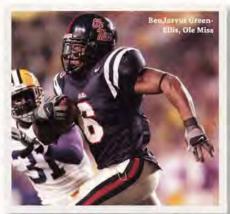
"Right now they are our two best receivers," Croom said.

Which means something, since secondteam guys Tony Burks and Aubrey Bell are proven playmakers.

Tackle Mike Brown and center Royce Blackledge are keys to Croom's best offensive line. Or they will be if a right tackle/guard rotation works itself out in August.

Last fall State had three quality senior defensive tackles. Now JC transfer Jessie Bowman and sophomore Kyle Love are the future, but Croom wasn't satisfied in the spring and shifted ends Cortez McCraney and Charles Burns inside.

"Tackles are my major concern," Croom said. Now so is depth at end. Fortunately the



Chris Graythen, Gelty Images



loug Pensinger, Getty Imager

starters are first-class and Titus Brown is an all-star candidate.

Junior Jamar Chaney directs the defense at middle linebacker with gifted sophomore Jamon Hughes set at weak-side. The secondary should be the most-improved defensive aspect. At cornerback Derek Pegues picked four balls and scored twice; now as a free safety he can make even more plays. Pegues and SS Keith Fitzhugh also upgrade the run-support, with a healthy Demario Bobo as nickel safety. If Anthony Johnson and Marcus Washington hold down the corners, replacing six of the team's top-10 tacklers from a year ago will be less frightening.

Placekicker Adam Carlson was much better in spring, punter Blake McAdams a bit more consistent. Dismal 2006 coverage still looms large in Croom's August plans.

"We still have a lot of improving to do. The kids coming in will help us out there."

So will lots of still-youthful personnel on a roster Croom has gradually improved, adding more aptitude to the better attitude.

"We have a very positive attitude about what we've done and what we can be."

6. MISSISSIPPI By Chuck Rounsaville Ole Miss Spirit

Losing linebacker Patrick Willis on the Ole Miss defense is akin to 2003 when the Ole Miss offense lost Eli Manning, and we all know how that went down. The Rebels haven't been good at quarterback since Manning graduated.

Players of that magnitude don't leave holes to fill, they leave craters.

But, in the SEC, the show must go on.

Spring training in Oxford was-to some extent-hole-filling time.

Ole Miss coach Ed Orgeron hired veteran SEC defensive coordinator John Thompson in the offseason, giving Coach O more time to be a head coach. Thompson will run Orgeron's 4-3 system that has been in place at Ole Miss for two years, but he'll have the leeway to give it a more aggressive edge and demeanor, Thompson's defensive trademark.

Thompson will have the entire defensive front returning, but he's faced with replacing Willis, free safety Charles Clark, NFL free agent linebacker Rory Johnson and draftee cornerback Trumaine McBrice on the back end.

Sophomore Jonathan Cornell emerged in spring as the heir apparent to Willis, while converted wide receiver Kendrick Lewis will most likely take over for Clark and sophomore speedster Cassius Vaughn will handle McBride's cornerback slot.

"We now know where we stand," Thompson said. "We made a lot of progress in spring, but we still have work to do and are still counting on a couple of JUCO signees to come in and contribute in a hurry this fall."

Junior college linebackers Tony Fein and Lamar Brumfield need to be as good as advertised during recruiting when they arrive in the summer to begin their Rebel careers.

The kicker in the deal that wasn't evident in spring is junior defensive tackle Peria Jerry, who was injured most of last season, but played hobbled. A healthy Jerry in the fall could make a world of difference in the Rebs' defensive productivity. Arguably, he's the best defensive player on the team and a guy who will draw a lot of double-teams.

On offense, the good news is the Rebs return their starting tailback, 1,000-yard rusher BenJarvus Green-Ellis, starting fullback Jason Cook, four starters on the offensive line, the top two tight ends and the top five wide receivers off last year's team.

In 2006, it was a unit that could run the ball effectively but had trouble in the passing game, translating into poor third-down and red zone production.

The spring goal was to shore up the passing game and find a left guard to start.

The bad news is the Rebels are still in the "average" strata at wide receiver and the quarterback situation is not stabilized.

Seniors Seth Adams and Brent Schaeffer, along with redshirt freshman Michael Herrick, battled to see who would be the No. 1 quarterback and nobody was declared a winner, even though Adams seemed to hold the edge most of the spring due to consistently doing what the coaches directed him to do.

Schaeffer, last year's starter, had a poor spring, but has time to make up ground if his consistency improves in the offseason and in August.

The Rebel offense should be improved due to the number of returning veterans, but the commander under center must emerge and take control.

GAME ONE: WESTERN CAROLINA

Saturday, September 1, Bryant-Denny, Tuscaloosa

Location: Cullowhee, N.C. Nickname: Catamounts Colors: Purple & Gold Conference: Southern Stadium: E.J. Whitmire 2006 Record: 2-9

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 0-1-0

Head Coach: Kent Briggs Career Record: 21-33

Record At Western Carolina: 21-33

Starters Returning: 16

Offense (7): FB Joe Clark-Dear, WR Eddie Cohen, TE L.J. Davis, G Josh

Deaver, WR Michael Hines, T James Singletary, C Keith Wiggins

Defense (7): E Jeff Bradley, S Angelo Brown, CB Antoine George, LB Kadeem Morgan, LB Mordy Ornguze, NT Gene Singletary, S Meko Watson

Specialists (2): PK Jonathan Parsons, P Stephen Brown

2006 Results

Aug. 31	Western Carolina	42	Chowan	0	
Sept. 16	Western Carolina	20	Eastern Kentucky	17	
Sept. 23	Furman	42	Western Carolina	7	
Sept. 30	Georgia Southern	24	Western Carolina	14	
Oct. 7	Elon	37	Western Carolina	19	
Oct. 14	Chattanooga	17	Western Carolina	14 (OT)	
Oct. 21	The Citadel	30	Western Carolina	27 (OT)	
Oct. 28	Wofford	35	Western Carolina	7	
Nov. 4	Liberty	21	Western Carolina	0	
Nov. 11	Appalachian State	31	Western Carolina	9	
Nov. 18	Florida	62	Western Carolina	0	

2007 Schedule

2007 501	leuule
Sept. 1	@ Alabama
Sept. 8	@ Eastern Kentucky
Sept. 15	@ Georgia
Sept. 22	Presbyterian
Sept. 29	@ Georgia Southern
Oct. 6	Elon
Oct. 13	@ Chattanooga
Oct. 20	The Citadel
Oct. 27	Wofford
Nov. 10	@ Appalachian State
Nov 17	Furman

GAME TWO: AT VANDERBILT

Saturday, September 8, Vanderbilt Stadium, Nashville

Location: Nashville, Tenn. Nickname: Commodores Colors: Gold & Black

Conference: Southeastern (East)

Stadium: Vanderbilt **2006 Record:** 5-6 (3-5 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 19-57-4

Head Coach: Bobby Johnson **Career Record:** 75-79 (13 years) Record At Vanderbilt: 15-43 (5 years)

Starters Returning: 19

Offense (9): WR George Smith, WR Earl Bennett, QB Chris Nickson, TB Cassen Jackson-Garrison, LT Chris Williams, LG Ryan Custer, C Hamilton Holliday, LG Josh Eames, TE Brad Allen.

Defense (8): RT Theo Horrocks, DE Curtis Gatewood, MLB Jonathan Goff, SLB Marcus Buggs, CB D.J. Moore, SS Reshard Langford, FS Ryan Hamilton, CB Joel Caldwell.

Specialists (2): PK Bryant Hahn Feldt, P Brett Upson.

2006 Results

Sept. 2	Michigan	27	Vanderbilt	7
Sept. 9	Alabama	13	Vanderbilt	10
Sept. 16	Arkansas	21	Vanderbilt	19
Sept. 23	Vanderbilt	38	Tennessee State	9
Sept. 30	Vanderbilt	43	Temple	14
Oct. 7	Ole Miss	17	Vanderbilt	10
Oct. 14	Vanderbilt	24	Georgia	22
Oct. 21	South Carolina	31	Vanderbilt	13
Oct. 28	Vanderbilt	45	Duke	28
Nov. 4	Florida	25	Vanderbilt	19
Nov. 11	Kentucky	38	Vanderbilt	26
Nov. 18	Tennessee	39	Vanderbilt	10

Sept. 1	Richmond
Sept. 8	ALABAMA
Sept. 15	Ole Miss
Sept. 29	Eastern Michigan
Oct. 6	@ Auburn
Oct. 13	Georgia
Oct. 20	@ South Carolina
Oct. 27	Miami (Ohio)
Nov. 3	@ Florida
Nov. 10	Kentucky
Nov. 17	@ Tennessee
Nov. 24	Wake Forest

GAME THREE: ARKANSAS

Saturday, September 15, Bryant-Denny, Tuscaloosa

Location: Fayetteville, Ark.
Nickname: Razorbacks
Colors: Cardinal & White
Conference: Southeastern
Stadium: Reynolds Razorback
2006 Record: 10-3 (7-1 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 7-10-0

Head Coach: Houston Nutt

Career Record: 103-65-0 (13 years) Record At Arkansas: 67-43-0 (8 years)

Starters Returning: 11

Offense (6): WR Marcus Monk, C Jonathan Luigs, G Robert Felton, QB

Casey Dick, TB Darren McFadden, FB Farod Jackson

Defense (4): LT Ernest Mitchell, E Antwain Robinson, LB Weston Dacus,

S Michael Grant

Specialists (1): PK Jeremy Davis

2006 Results

Sept. 2	Southern Cal	50	Arkansas	14
Sept. 9	Arkansas	20	Utah State	0
Sept. 16	Arkansas	21	Vanderbilt	19
Sept. 23	Arkansas	24	Alabama	23 (2 OT)
Oct. 7	Arkansas	27	Auburn	10
Oct. 14	Arkansas	63	SE Missouri State	7
Oct. 21	Arkansas	38	Ole Miss	3
Nov. 4	Arkansas	26	South Carolina	20
Nov. 11	Arkansas	31	Tennessee	14
Nov. 18	Arkansas	28	Mississippi State	14
Nov. 24	LSU	31	Arkansas	26
Dec. 2	Florida	38	Arkansas	28
Jan. 1	Wisconsin	17	Arkansas	14
(Capital (One Bowl)			

2007 Schedule

Troy
@ Alabama
Kentucky
North Texas

Oct. 6 U-T-Chattanooga @ Little Rock

Oct. 13 Auburn
Oct. 20 @ Ole Miss

Oct. 27 Florida International

Nov. 3 South Carolina Nov. 10 @ Tennessee

Nov. 17 Mississippi State @ Little Rock

Nov. 24 @ LSU

GAME FOUR: GEORGIA

Saturday, September 22, Bryant-Denny, Tuscaloosa

Location: Athens, Ga.
Nickname: Bulldogs
Colors: Red, Black & Silver
Conference: Southeastern (East)

Stadium: Sanford

2006 Record: 9-4 (4-4 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 24-35-4

Head Coach: Mark Richt **Career Record:** 61-17 (6 years) Record At Georgia: 61-17 (6 years)

Starters Returning: 12

Offense (7): WR Mohamed Massaquoi, G Fernando Velasco, QB Matthew Stafford, G Chester Adams, FB Brannan Southerland, TB Kregg Lumpkin,

WR A.J. Bryant

Defense (4): T Jeff Owens, CB Bryan Evans, S Kelin Johnson, CB Paul

Oliver

Specialists (1): Brandon Coutu

2006 Results

Sept. 2	Georgia	48	Western Kentucky	12	
Sept. 9	Georgia	18	South Carolina	0	
Sept. 16	Georgia	34	UAB	0	
Sept. 23	Georgia	14	Colorado	13	
Sept. 30	Georgia	14	Ole Miss	9	
Oct. 7	Tennessee	51	Georgia	33	
Oct. 14	Vanderbilt	24	Georgia	22	
Oct. 21	Georgia	27	Mississippi State	24	
Oct. 28	Florida	21	Georgia	14	
Nov. 4	Kentucky	24	Georgia	20	
Nov. 11	Georgia	37	Auburn	15	
Nov. 25	Georgia	15	Georgia Tech	12	
Dec. 30	Georgia	31	Virginia Tech	24	(Chick-Fil-
A Bowl)					

2007 Schedule				
Sept. 1	Oklahoma State			
Sept. 8	South Carolina			
Sept. 15	Western Carolina			
Sept. 22	@ Alabama			
Sept. 29	Ole Miss			
Oct. 8	@ Tennessee			
Oct. 13	@ Vanderbilt			
Oct. 27	Florida @ Jacksonville			
Nov. 3	Troy			
Nov. 10	Auburn			
Nov. 17	Kentucky			
Nov. 24	@ Georgia Tech			

GAME FIVE: FSU

Saturday, September 29, Alltel, Jacksonville

Location: Tallahassee, Fla. Nickname: Seminoles Colors: Garnet & Gold Conference: ACC Stadium: Doak Campbell 2006 Record: 7-6

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 0-2-1

Head Coach: Bobby Bowden Career Record: 366-113-4 Record At FSU: 293-81-4 Starters Returning: 16

Offense (6): QB Drew Weatherford, FB Joe Surratt, Jr., WR De'Cody Fagg,

G Jacky Claude, C John Frady, T Shannon Boatman

Defense (8): E Alex Boston, NG Andre Fluellen, T Letroy Guion, LB Geno Hayes, CB Tony Carter, CB Jamie Robinson, S Roger Williams, S Myron

Rolle

Specialits (2): PK Gary Cismesia, P Graham Gano

2006 Results

Sept. 4	FSU	13	Miami	10	
Sept. 9	FSU	24	Troy	17	
Sept. 16	Clemson	27	FSU	20	
Sept. 23	FSU	55	Rice	7	
Oct. 5	North Carolina State	24	FSU	20	
Oct. 14	FSU	51	Duke	24	
Oct. 21	Boston College	24	FSU	19	
Oct. 28	Maryland	27	FSU	24	
Nov. 4	FSU	33	Virginia	0	
Nov. 11	Wake Forest	30	FSU	0	
Nov. 18	FSU	28	Western Michigan	20	
Nov. 25	Florida	21	FSU	14	
Dec. 27	FSU	44	UCLA	27	(Emerald
Bowl)					

2007 Schedule

Nov. 24 @ Florida

Sept. 3	@ Clemson			
Sept. 8	UAB			
Sept. 15	@ Colorado			
Sept. 29	Alabama @ Jacksonville			
Oct. 6	North Carolina State			
Oct. 11	@ Wake Forest			
Oct. 20	Miami			
Oct. 27	Duke			
Nov. 3	Boston College			
Nov. 10	@ Virginia Tech			
Nov. 17	Maryland			

GAME SIX: HOUSTON

Saturday, October 6, Bryant-Denny, Tuscaloosa

Location: Houston, Texas **Nickname:** Cougars

Colors: Scarlet & White & Navy

Conference: C-USA Stadium: Robertson 2006 Record: 10-4

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 0-9-0

Head Coach: Art Briles **Career Record:** 26-24 (4 years) Record At Houston: 26-24 (4 years)

Starters Returning: 17

Offense (8): OL Jeff Akeroyd, RB Anthony Alridge, WR Donnie Avery, OL Michael Bloesch, OL Dustin Dickinson, TE Mark Hafner, WR Jeron Harvey, OL SirVincent Rogers

Defense (8): LB Trent Allen, CB Kenneth Fontenette, E Phillip Hunt, LB Cody Lubojasky, S Ernest Miller, LB Brendan Pahulu, E Cody Pree, SS Rocky Schwartz

Specialists (1): PK Ben Bell

2006 Results

Sept. 2	Houston	31	Rice	30
Sept. 9	Houston	45	Tulane	7
Sept. 16	Houston	42	Grambling	22
Sept. 23	Houston	34	Oklahoma State 25	
Sept. 30	Miami	14	Houston	13
Oct. 7	Louisiana-Lafayette	31	Houston	28
Oct. 14	Southern Miss	31	Houston	27
Oct. 21	Houston	34	Texas-El Paso	27
Oct. 28	Houston	51	Central Florida	31
Nov. 4	Houston	27	Tulsa	10
Nov. 11	Houston	37	SMU	27
Nov. 18	Houston	23	Memphis	20 (OT)
Dec. 1	Houston	34	Southern Miss	20
(C-USA C	hampionship)			
Dec. 29	South Carolina	44	Houston	36
(Liberty E	Bowl)			

@ Oregon
@ Tulane
Colorado State
East Carolina
@ Alabama
Rice
@ UAB
@ Texas-El Paso
SMU
@ Tulsa
Marshall
Texas Southern

GAME SEVEN: OLE MISS

Saturday, October 13, Hemingway, Oxford

Location: Oxford, Miss. Nickname: Rebels Colors: Red & Navy Blue

Conference: Southeastern (West) Stadium: Vaught-Hemingway 2006 Record: 4-8 (2-6 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 9-43-2

Head Coach: Ed Orgeron Career Record: 7-16 Record At Ole Miss: 7-16 Starters Returning: 17

Offense (9): WR Mike Wallace, T Michael Oher, C Corey Actis, G John Jerry, T Maurice Miller, WR Dexter McCluster, QB Brent Schaeffer, RB BenJarvis Green-Ellis, FB Jason Cook

Defense (6): E Greg Hardy, T Marcus Tillman, NG Brandon Jenkins, E

Peria Jerry, LB Jamarca Sanford, CB Nate Banks **Specialists (2):** PK Joshua Shene, P Rob Park

2006 Results

Sept. 3	Ole Miss	28	Memphis	5
Sept. 9	Missouri	34	Ole Miss	7
Sept. 16	Kentucky	31	Ole Miss	14
Sept. 23	Wake Forest	27	Ole Miss	3
Sept. 30	Georgia	14	Ole Miss	9
Oct. 7	Ole Miss	17	Vanderbilt	10
Oct. 14	Alabama	26	Ole Miss	23 (OT)
Oct. 21	Arkansas	38	Ole Miss	3
Oct. 28	Auburn	23	Ole Miss	17
Nov. 4	Ole Miss	27	Northwestern St	7
Nov. 18	LSU	23	Ole Miss	20 (OT)
Nov. 25	Ole Miss	20	Mississippi State	17

2007 Schedule

Sept. 1 @ Memphis	
Sept. 8	Missouri
Sept. 15	@ Vanderbilt
Sept. 22	Florida
Sept. 29	@ Georgia
Oct. 6	Louisiana Tech
Oct. 13	Alabama
Oct. 20	Arkansas
Oct. 27	@ Auburn
Nov. 3	Northwestern State
Nov. 17	LSU
Nov. 24	@ Mississippi State
Oct. 20 Oct. 27 Nov. 3 Nov. 17	Arkansas @ Auburn Northwestern Sta LSU

GAME EIGHT: TENNESSEE

Saturday, October 20, Bryant-Denny, Tuscaloosa

Location: Knoxville, Tenn.
Nickname: Volunteers
Colors: Orange & White

Conference: Southeastern (East)

Stadium: Neyland

2006 Record: 9-4 (5-3 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 38-44-7

Head Coach: Phil Fulmer

Career Record: 137-41 (14 years)
Record At Tennessee: 137-41 (14 years)

Starters Returning: 13

Offense (7): TE Chris Brown, TE Brad Cottam, C Josh McNeil, G Anthony

Parker, T Anthony Young, QB Erik Ainge, TB LaMarcus Cooper

Defense (5): E Xavier Mitchell, E Antonio Reynolds, LB Ryan Karl, LB

Jerod Mayo, S Jonathan Hefney Specialists (1): P Britton Colquitt

2006 Results

Sept. 2	Tennessee	35 Cal		18	
Sept. 9	Tennessee	31	Air Force	30	
Sept. 16	Florida	21	Tennessee	20	
Sept. 23	Tennessee	33	Marshall	7	
Sept. 30	Tennessee	41	Memphis	7	
Oct. 7	Tennessee	51	Georgia	33	
Oct. 21	Tennessee	16	Alabama	13	
Oct. 28	Tennessee	31	South Carolina	24	
Nov. 4	LSU	28	Tennessee	24	
Nov. 11	Arkansas	31	Tennessee	14	
Nov. 18	Tennessee	39	Vanderbilt	10	
Nov. 25	Tennessee	17	Kentucky	12	
Jan. 1	Penn State	20	Tennessee	10	(Outback
Bowl)					

LOUI DEL	reune
Sept. 1	@ Cal
Sept. 8	Southern Miss
Sept. 15	@ Florida
Sept. 22	Arkansas State
Oct. 6	Georgia
Oct. 13	@ Mississippi State
Oct. 20	@ Alabama
Oct. 27	South Carolina
Nov. 3	Louisiana-Lafayette
Nov. 10	Arkansas
Nov. 17	Vanderbilt
Nov. 24	@ Kentucky

GAME NINE: LSU

Saturday, November 13, Bryant-Denny, Tuscaloosa

Location: Baton Rouge, La.

Nickname: Tigers Colors: Purple & Gold

Conference: Southeastern (West)

Stadium: Tiger

2006 Record: 11-2 (6-2 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 22-43-5

Head Coach: Les Miles

Career Record: 50-25 (6 years) Record At LSU: 22-4 (2 years)

Starters Returning: 14

Offense (6): T Ciron Black, G Herman Johnson, C Brett Helms, TE Richard

Dickson, RB Jacob Hester, WR Early Doucet

Defense (8): E Tyson Jackson, T Glenn Dorsey, T Charles Alexander, LB Ali Highsmith, LB Darry Beckwith, LB Luke Sanders, CB Jonathan Zenon,

CB Chevis Jackson

2006 Results

Sept. 2	LSU	45	Louisiana-Lafayette	3
Sept. 9	LSU	45	Arizona	3
Sept. 16	Auburn	7	LSU	3
Sept. 23	LSU	49	Tulane	7
Sept. 30	LSU	48	Mississippi State	17
Oct. 7	Florida	23	LSU	10
Oct. 14	LSU	49	Kentucky	0
Oct. 21	LSU	38	Fresno State	6
Nov. 4	LSU	28	Tennessee	24
Nov. 11	LSU	28	Alabama	14
Nov. 18	LSU	23	Ole Miss	20 (OT)
Nov. 24	LSU	31	Arkansas	26
Jan. 3	LSU	41	Notre Dame	14
(Sugar Bo	owl)			

2007 Schedule

Aug. 30	@ Mississippi State		
Sept. 8	Virginia Tech		
Sept. 15	Middle Tennessee		
Sept. 22	South Carolina		
Sept. 29	@ Tulane		
Oct. 6	Florida		
Oct. 13	@ Kentucky		
Oct. 20	Auburn		
Nov. 3	@ Alabama		
Nov. 10	Louisiana Tech		
Nov. 17	@ Ole Miss		
Nov. 24	Arkansas		

GAME TEN: MISSISSIPPI STATE

Saturday, November 10, Davis Wade, Starkville

Location: Starkville, Miss.
Nickname: Bulldogs
Colors: Maroon & White

Conference: Southeastern (West)

Stadium: Davis-Wade 2006 Record: 3-9 (1-7 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 16-72-3

Head Coach: Sylvester Croom Career Record: 9-25 (3 years)

Record At Mississippi State:9-25 (3 years)

Starters Returning: 16

Offense (9): WR Jamayel Smith, T J.D. Hamilton, G Anthony Strauder, C Royce Blackledge, T Craig Jenkins, TE Dezmond Sherrod, HB Anthony Dixon, QB Michael Henig, WR Tony Burks

Defense (5): E Titus Brown, LB Gabe O'Neal, LB Jamar Chaney, CB Derek

Pegues, SS Keith Fitzhugh

Specialists (2): PK Adam Carlson, P Blake McAdams

2006 Results

Aug. 31	South Carolina	15	Mississippi State	0
Sept. 9	Auburn	34	Mississippi State	0
Sept. 16	Tulane	32	Mississippi State	29
Sept. 23	Mississippi State	16	UAB	10 (OT
Sept. 30	LSU	48	Mississippi State	17
Oct. 7	West Virginia	42	Mississippi State	14
Oct. 14	Mississippi State	35	Jacksonville State	3
Oct. 21	Georgia	27	Mississippi State	24
Oct. 28	Kentucky	34	Mississippi State	31
Nov. 4	Mississippi State	24	Alabama	16
Nov. 18	Arkansas	28	Mississippi State	14
Nov. 25	Ole Miss	20	Mississippi State	17

Aug. 30	LSU
Sept. 8	@ Tulane
Sept. 15	@ Auburn
Sept. 22	Jacksonville State
Sept. 29	@ South Carolina
Oct. 6	UAB
Oct. 13	Tennessee
Oct. 20	@ West Virginia
Oct. 27	@ Kentucky
Nov. 10	Alabama
Nov. 17	@ Arkansas
Nov. 24	Ole Miss

GAME ELEVEN: LOUISIANA-MONROE

Saturday, November 17, Bryant-Denny, Tuscaloosa

Location: Monroe, La. Nickname: Warhawks Colors: Maroon & Gold Conference: Sun Belt Stadium: Malone 2006 Record: 4-8

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 0-1 Head Coach: Charlie Weatherbie Career Record: 60-95 (14 years)

Record At Louisiana-Monroe: 15-31 (4 years)

Starters Returning: 18

Offense (11): TE Mitch Doyle, OT Larry Shappley, OG Patrick Avinger, C Adam Hill, OG Aaron Schutz, OT Kyle Cunningham, WR J.J. McCoy, WR Darrell McNeal, WR LaGregory Sapp, RB Calvin Dawson, QB Kinsmon Lancaster

Defense (6): DT David Cooper, NT Kendall Mouton, DE Jamieson Jordan, LB Cardia Jackson, S Josh Thompson, CB Quintez Secka

Specialists (1): PK Cole Wilson

2006 Results

Aug. 31	ULM	24	Alcorn State	6
Sept. 9	Kansas	21	ULM	19
Sept. 16	Alabama	41	ULM	7
Sept. 30	Florida Atlantic	21	ULM	19
Oct. 7	Arkansas State	10	ULM	6
Oct. 14	Troy	24	ULM	19
Oct. 21	Middle Tennessee	35	ULM	21
Oct. 28	Arkansas	44	ULM	10
Nov. 11	ULM	35	Florida International	0
Nov. 18	Kentucky	42	ULM	40
Nov. 25	ULM	23	North Texas	3
Dec. 2	ULM	39	Louisiana-Lafayette	20

2007 Schedule

Aug. 30	Tulsa
Sept. 8	@ Clemson
Sept. 15	@ Texas A&M
Sept. 29	@ Troy
Oct. 6	Arkansas State
Oct. 13	@ North Texas
Oct. 20	Florida International
Oct. 27	Florida Atlantic
Nov. 3	Middle Tennessee
Nov. 10	Grambling
Nov. 17	@ Alabama
Nov. 24	@ Louisiana-Lafayette

GAME TWELVE: AUBURN

Saturday, November 24, Jordan-Hare, Auburn

Location: Auburn Nickname: Tigers Colors: Orange & Blue

Conference: Southeastern (West)

Stadium: Jordan-Hare 2006 Record: 11-2 (6-2 SEC)

All-Time Record Vs. Alabama: 32-38-1

Head Coach: Tommy Tuberville **Career Record:** 96-49 (12 years) Record At Auburn: 71-29 (8 years)

Starters Returning: 12

Offense (5): FB Carl Stewart, QB Brandon Cox, WR Rodgeriqus Smith, T King Dunlap, TE Tommy Trott

Defense (7): NG Josh Thompson, T Sen'Derrick Marks, E Quentin Groves, LB Merrill Johnson, SS Eric Brock, S Aarion Savage, CB Jonathan Wilhite

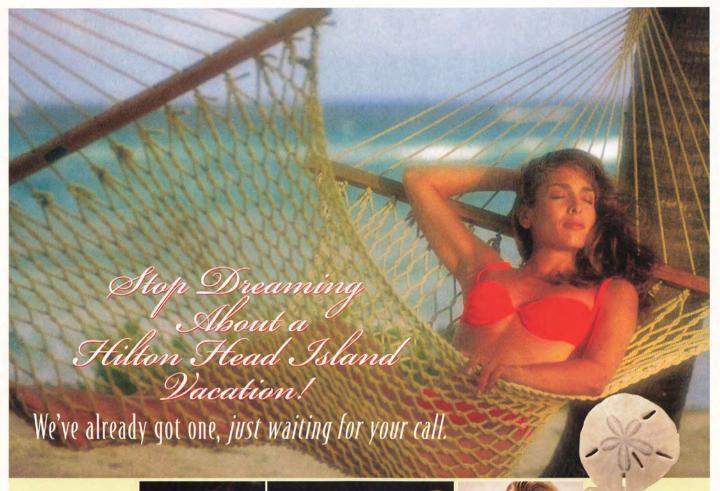
2006 Results

Sept. 2	Auburn	40	Washington State	14	
Sept. 9	Auburn	34	Mississippi State	0	
Sept. 16	Auburn	7	LSU	3	
Sept. 23	Auburn	38	Buffalo	7	
Sept. 28	Auburn	24	South Carolina	17	
Oct. 7	Arkansas	27	Auburn	10	
Oct. 14	Auburn	27	Florida	17	
Oct. 21	Auburn	38	Tulane	13	
Oct. 28	Auburn	23	Ole Miss	17	
Nov. 4	Auburn	27	Arkansas State	0	
Nov. 11	Georgia	37	Auburn	15	
Nov. 18	Auburn	22	Alabama	15	
Jan. 1	Auburn	17	Nebraska	14	
(Cotton I	Bowl)				

2007 6-1-1-1-

2007 Schedule		
Sept. 1	Kansas State	
Sept. 8	South Florida	
Sept. 15	Mississippi State	
Sept. 22	New Mexico State	
Sept. 29	@Florida	
Oct. 6	Vanderbilt	
Oct. 13	@Arkansas	
Oct. 20	@LSU	
Oct. 27	Ole Miss	
Nov. 3	Tennessee Tech	

Nov. 10 @Georgia Nov. 24 Alabama









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ALABAMA ASSISTANT FOOTBALL COACHES



Major Applewhite Offensive Coordinator Quarterbacks



Burton Burns Associate Head Coach Running Backs



Joe Pendry Assistant Head Coach Offense Offensive Line



Ron Middleton Special Teams/Tight Ends



Kirby Smart Assistant Head Coach Defense Secondary



Curt Cignetti Recruiting Coordinator Receivers



Kevin Steele Defensive Coordinator Inside Linebackers



Bo Davis Defensive Line



Lance Thompson Outside Linebackers

FOOTBALL BY ANDREW BONE

RECRUITING TERRITORIES

New Tide Football Coaches Established Recruiters

ew University of Alabama football coaches bring extensive backgrounds as outstanding recruiters. The coaches were already well-established recruiters and in many cases familiar names in the areas Head Coach Nick Saban assigned them to recruit for the Crimson Tide.

Recruiting is more than a matter of territories. Coaching staffs develop various lists to match needs with prospects. Additionally, there is consultation, particularly between the territory coach and the position coach. Finally, at Alabama, the head coach is committed to the recruiting process and an active participant at every stage.

Here is a look at Alabama's assistant coaches and their recruiting duties:

Major Applewhite came to Alabama from Rice, where he served as the youngest offensive coordinator in Division 1 football. His duties included coaching the quarterbacks. Applewhite's 2006 resume included 1,000-yard producers in each of the positions of receiver, quarterback and running back. He spent one year at Syracuse as quarterbacks coach before going to Rice.

He was a graduate assistant for the Texas Longhorns and played a big part in the development of quarterback Vince Young.

Applewhite's out-of-state recruiting territory of Texas was a no-brainer after he had built a name for himself as one of the top quarterbacks in Longhorns history. He is a native of Louisiana and named after Alabama great Major Ogilvie. Applewhite also recruits Georgia.

Serving as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach for Alabama, Applewhite has the in-state recruiting area of Northeast Alabama. This includes hot spots like Huntsville, Gadsden and Anniston. He has secured the commitment of safety Wesley Neighbors (Huntsville) and is recruiting several other highprofule prospects including Scout.com four-star linebacker Jerrell Harris (Gadsden City) and offensive tackle Antoine McClain (Anniston).

Burton Burns, associate head coach and running backs coach, brings a strong resume with a background recruiting in Louisiana, South Carolina and Georgia.

Burns served as an assistant coach at Clemson for the last eight years with two of the



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more notable running backs in James Davis, the 2005 ACC Rookie of the Year and C.J. Spiller, a first team freshman All-America in 2006. Clemson established over 100 records on offense during Burns' tenure.

The biggest in-road to Louisiana is through Burns, a native from New Orleans and former head coach at St. Augustine High School. Burns also suited up for four seasons as a fullback for Coach Tom Osborne at Nebraska.

Curt Cignetti, recruiting coordinator



and wide receivers coach, is appropriately assigned the East Coast recruiting area. He is also assigned the state of Tennessee. Cignetti served as recruiting

coordinator and tight ends coach for the last seven years at North Carolina State. He was at Pittsburgh for six years.

Cignetti was a quarterback at West Virginia and has strong NFL connections with his brother Frank, Jr., the quarterbacks coach for the San Franciso 49ers.

Cignetti recruits Northwest Alabama including the schools of Russellville, Decatur, Hartselle and R.A. Hubbard. Players on the recruiting radar from this area include Michael Abernathy and Caleb Mitchell, both from

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Russellville. Decatur produced 2007 Tide signee linebacker Rolando McClain.

Bo Davis was a strength and conditioning coach under Saban at both LSU and Miami. He is the defensive line coach for Bama. He has recruiting responsibilities in Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Texas. Davis was an All-SEC defensive lineman for the LSU Tigers. He hails from Mississippi and also coached for five years in Galena Park, Texas.

Ron Middleton is an Auburn graduate and former player for the Tigers. He coaches Alabama's tight ends and special teams. He served the same position for the last three years for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Middleton is well-versed in the SEC after five seasons with the Ole Miss Rebels coaching special teams and running backs. His Ole Miss record includes coaching the Lou Gonza Award winner, All-SEC kicker Jonathan Nichols. He also coached Rebels punter Cody Ridgeway, the son of former Alabama kicker Danny Ridgeway.

Middleton played in the NFL with the Atlanta Falcons, Washington Redskins, Cleveland Browns and San Diego Chargers.

His target areas include Florida, Mississippi and Southwest Alabama. Thomasville and Sweet Water are two of the top programs in-state. Running back Anthony Landrum of Sweet Water is a prospect.

Almost every top prospect has an interest in going from college to the NFL. It helps to have assistant coaches who know professional football. Alabama certainly has that man in Joe Pendry, the Crimson Tide's assistant head for offense and offensive line coach. Pendry has 19 years of NFL experience. He came to Tuscaloosa after having served the Houston Texans as the offensive line coach, and coached for several other NFL teams. His college football career was spent at West Virginia as an offensive lineman.

Pendry recruits Tuscaloosa and the Pickens County area and the state of Tennessee. He has



Scout com

reeled in three commitments for the class of 2008 in offensive lineman John Michael Boswell (Tuscaloosa County), defensive end Michael Williams (Pickens County), and wide receiver Brad Smelley (American Christian Academy in Tuscaloosa).

A former player for the Georgia Bulldogs, Kirby Smart is assistant head coach for defense and coaches the secondary. As a player he was All-Southeastern Conference and led the Bulldogs in interceptions two seasons.

Smart arrived in Tuscaloosa from the Miami Dolphins as Nick Saban's safeties coach. Prior to Miami he coached at Georgia, LSU (with Saban), FSU and Valdosta State.

The Bainbridge, Georgia, native has the Peach State as one of his main areas to recruit along with Florida and Southeast Alabama. Instate high schools in his recruiting area include Auburn, home of Scout.com four-star safety Dee Finley. Prattville has been a pipeline to Alabama, but this year it is expected to be difficult for Bama to land running back Justin Albert and/or wide receiver Dekendrick Moncrief. A big target for the Tide is defensive end Courtney Upshaw from Eufaula.

Kevin Steele, a Tennessee graduate, is Alabama's defensive cordinator and inside linebackers coach. He played under Johnny Majors in the late 1970s. He arrived in Tuscaloosa via Tallahassee, where he was the linebackers coach for the Florida State Seminoles. A notable pupil of Steele's was FSU linebacker Ernie Sims, the ninth NFL selection by the Detroit Lions.

He has coached on numerous college teams and in the NFL. He was head coach at Baylor (1999-2002) before going to FSU. He coached with the Carolina Panthers and New Orleans Saints of the NFL and was a college assistant at Nebraska, Tennessee, New Mexico State and Oklahoma State.

Steele has a national reputation as a top recruiter and will use those skills in the recruiting areas of Tennesse, Virginia and Central Alabama. Several powerhouse in-state schools include Hoover, Spain Park, Mountain Brook, Vestavia Hills, Oak Mountain and Briarwood Christian.

Two of the premier in-state prospects under Steele's watch are offensive lineman

Tyler Love (Mountain Brook) and defensive end William Green (Spain Park). Steele has secured the commitments of defensive end Brandon Lewis (Pleasant Grove) and defensive end Undra Billingsley (Woodlawn).

Lance Thompson returns to Alabama as the outside linebackers coach. He previously served as Bama's defensive line coach (1999-2000). Thompson has plenty of experience under his belt including stops at LSU (national championship season under Saban), Georgia Tech (11 years), and the last three seasons at Central Florida as defensive coordinator. His roles along the way included on-the-field coaching and recruiting coordinator. He was a four-year letterman at The Citadel.

Thompson is responsible for recruiting in Florida. He also has one of the hottest spots in the country for the Class of 2008: the Mobile area. Saban doesn't put a premium on one area of the state. He wants to recruit the best players in every part of Alabama. Saban would be aware that Mobile produces great talent and that much of it has not been recruited to The University of Alabama. When Saban was head coach at LSU he was able to lure such talents as JaMarcus Russell, recently the number one NFL draft choice, and Chevis Jackson from Mobile.

Thompson is off to a great start landing commitments from running back Ivan Matchett (St. Paul's) and running back Jermaine Preyear (Davidson).

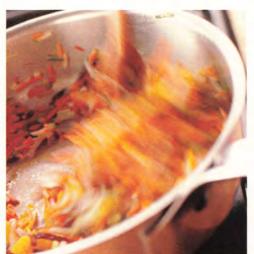
Scout.com ranks Julio Jones (Foley) as the number one wide receiver in the nation. Jones is a top priority as Alabama hopes to secure his signature in February on national signing day. Other nationally recruited offensive players in Thompson's area include receiver Burton Scott (Vigor), receiver Mark Barron (St. Paul's), receiver Destin Hood (St. Paul's), running back Reggie Hunt (Daphne) and offensive lineman Teavis Durgin (Daphne).

The defensive side of the ball in the Mobile area also has top prospects. Three with Alabama scholarship offers (and with Bama thought to be in the lead) are defensive end Glenn Harbin (McGill-Toolen), linebacker Jacoby Thomas (Murphy) and linebacker Willie Bohannon (Blount).

Defensive backs Robert Lester (Foley), Louis Watson (St. Paul,s), LaFrazier Forrest (B.C. Rain) and Marcal Robinson (Vigor) also are receiving attention.

Coach Saban has said that any spot within a five-hour drive of Tuscaloosa is "local," and he considers Alabama to be strong in local recruiting. Beyond that five-hour window, the names combination of traditional college football power Alabama and hottest coach in the nation Nick Saban means the Crimson Tide can take on the challenge of recruiting any top player regardless of geography.







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ALABAMA FOOTBALL HOT LIST

Name	Pos	Hgt	Wgt	40-time	Hometown (School)
Michael Abernathy	FB	5-11	235	4.5	Russellville
Ken Adams	TE	6-5	215	N/A	Enterprise
Justin Albert	RB	5-8	170	4.45	Prattville
Jonathan Baldwin	TE	6-6	200	4.4	Allquippa, Pa.
Darrius Barksdale	S	6-1	188	N/A	Batesville, Miss. (South Panola)
T.J. Barnes	OT	6-6	320	N/A	Enterprise
Mark Barron	WR	6-2	205	4.5	Mobile (St. Paul's)
Andre Berry	WR	6-3	195	N/A	Tarrant
*Undra Billingsley	TE	6-3	245	N/A	Birmingham (Woodlawn)
Willie Bohannon	DE	6-2	225	4.8	Mobile (Blount)
Devonta Bolton *John Michael Boswell	WR	6-4	210	4.5	Norcross, Ga.
Matt Branch	OL TE	6-5 6-6	290	N/A	Tuscaloosa (Tuscaloosa County)
Xzavian Brandon	WR	6-3	240 175	4.8 N/A	Sterlington, La.
Xavier Brewer	CB	5-10	165	4.5	Duluth, Ga. (Northview)
DeAndre Brown	WR	6-5	215	4.59	Jacksonville, Fla. (Bartram Trail) Ocean Springs, Miss.
James Brown	DT	6-1	285	N/A	Cottondale (Paul W. Bryant)
Justin Brown	WR	5-9	152	N/A	Athens
Daniel Bryant	WR	6-1	182	4.5	Tallahassee, Fla. (Lawton Chiles)
T.J. Bryant	CB	6-0	175	N/A	Tallahassee, Fla. (Lincoln)
Jarrett Burns	QB	6-3	185	N/A	Huntsville (Lee)
Ronald Byrd	OT	6-5	246	5.29	Hogansville, Ga. (Callaway)
Scott Byrd	DT	6-2	250	4.9	Mobile (St. Paul's)
Jermie Calhoun	RB	6-0	195	4.5	Van, Texas
Chase Clement	DE	6-5	240	4.7	Thibodeaux, La. (E.D. White)
Kendrick Cook	TE	6-3	230	N/A	Attalla (Etowah)
Alex Davis	DE	6-3	236	4.7	Birmingham (Briarwood Christian)
Peters Drey	OT	6-5	280	N/A	Mobile (McGill-Toolen)
Alfred Dupree	SLB	6-2	210	4.78	Dallas, Texas (Skyline)
Teavis Durgin	OT	6-6	295	N/A	Daphne
Tyler Edwards	TE	6-4	238	4.7	Monroe, La. (Ouachita Parish)
Dee Finley	S	6-3	198	N/A	Auburn
Dwight Floyd	CB	5-11	180	4.5	Pensacola, Fla.
British Footman	RB	5-11	178	4.5	Tallahassee, Fla. (Godby)
Daniel Forester	DE	6-4	240	N/A	Birmingham (Briarwood Christian)
LaFrazier Frost	CB	5-10	175	N/A	Mobile (B.C. Rain)
Blaine Gabbert	QB	6-4	225	4.65	Ballwin, Mo. (Parkway West)
Matthew Gordon	WR	6-0	185	4.55	Birmingham (Briarwood Christian)
Robby Green	S	6-1	180	4.5	River Ridge, La. (John Curtis)
William Green	DE	6-5	208	N/A	Birmingham (Spain Park)
Cordian Hagans	DT	6-5	265	N/A	Duluth, Ga. (Northview)
Dévon Hairston	S	6-1	175	N/A	Enterprise
Glenn Harbin	DE	6-5	230	4.8	Mobile (McGill-Toolen)
Templeton Hardy	DT	6-4	280	5.2	Sardis, Miss. (North Panola)
Antonio Harper	SLB	6-4	220	4.7	Memphis, Tenn. (Melrose)
Jacory Harris	QB	6-3	175	4.8	Miami, Fla. (Northwestern)
Jarrell Harris	LB	6-3	208	4.5	Gadsden (Gadsden City)
Karnell Hatcher Chris Hood	QB	6-2 6-1	183	N/A	Delray Beach, Fla. (Atlantic)
Destin Hood	WR	6-2	182	N/A 4.5	Birmingham (Huffman)
Reggie Hunt	RB	5-8	180	4.4	Mobile (St. Paul's) Daphne
Nelson Hurst	TE	6-4	240	4.7	Plainfield, Ind.
Joseph Ibiloye	OLB	6-2	192	4.56	Garland, Texas (South Garland)
David Isabelle	QB	6-3	180	*****	Huntsville (Johnson)
Dontavius Jackson	RB	5-10	188	N/A 4.59	Franklin, Ga. (Heard County)
Terrell Jackson	LB	6-1	190	N/A	Prattville
Toby Jackson	DE	6-4	245	N/A	Griffin, Ga.
Josh Jarboe	WR	6-3	195	4.45	Ellenwood, Ga. (Cedar Grove)
D.C. Jefferson	QB	6-6	225	N/A	Winter Haven, Fla.
Barrett Jones	OT	6-5	260	N/A	Cordova, Tenn. (Evangelical Christian)
Eric Jones	OT	6-6	275	N/A	Birmingham (Spain Park)
Julio Jones	WR	6-4	212	4.5	Foley
Chris Jordan	RB	6-2	208	4.5	Brentwood, Tenn. (Brentwood Academy)
Casey Kelly	QB	6-4	195	4.6	Sarasota, Fla.
Tae Keith	WR	6-2	200	4.68	Talladega
Anthony Landrum	RB	6-1	205	4.6	Sweet Water
Alonzo Landry	RB	5-10	205	4.6	Lafayette, La. (Carencro)
*Brandon Lewis	DE	6-3	260	N/A	Pleasant Grove
Corey Liuget	DE	6-3	229	4.87	Hialeah, Fla.
Joe Looney	OG	6-3	312	5.5	Lake Worth, Fla.
Tyler Love	OL	6-7	270	N/A	Birmingham (Mountain Brook)
Duane Maddox	MLB	6-2	220	4.65	Shelby, N.C. (Crest)
Terrell Manning	WLB	6-3	205	N/A	Laurinburg, N.C. (Scotland)
Chris Martin	DT	6-5	290	N/A	Ft. Walton Bch, Fla. (Choctowhatchee)

ALABAMA FOOTBALL HOT LIST

Name Name	Pos Pos	Hgt Hgt	Wgt Wgt	40-time 40-time	Hometown (School) Hometown (School)
*Ivan Matchett	RB	5-10	205	4.6	Mobile (St. Paul's)
Antoine McClain	OT	6-6	313	N/A	Anniston
Greg McGrue	OT	6-8	350	5.4	Birmingham (Huffman)
Caleb Mitchell	CB	6-0	175	4.4	Russellville
Timothy Molton	WR	6-2	176	4.55	Destrehan, La.
Dekendrick Moncrief	WR	6-0	175	N/A	Prattville
	WR	6-4	180		
Darius Morgan				4.72	Citra, Fla. (Marion)
*Wesley Neighbors	S	6-2	195	4.55	Huntsville
Morgan Ogilvie	QB	6-1	185	4.7	Birmingham (Bessemer Academy)
Jonathan Owens	OG	6-3	285	N/A	Blountsville (Susan Moore)
Davin Palmer	RB	5-7	160	4.45	Birmingham (Hoover)
Terrance Parks	CB	6-1	200	N/A	Fairburn, Ga. (Creekside)
Matt Patchan	OT	6-6	250	4.7	Tampa, Fla. (Freedom)
Quinton Pierce	WR	6-2	185	4.5	Mobile (Davidson)
DaMario Pippen	RB	5-10	185	N/A	Tuscaloosa (Central)
Lavanda Powe	DT	6-5	225	N/A	Silas (Southern Choctaw)
*Jermaine Preyear	RB	5-11	195	N/A	Mobile (Davidson)
Spencer Pybus	LB	6-1	200	N/A	Dothan (Northview)
Robert Quinn	DE	6-4	255	4.78	North Charleston, S.C. (Fort Dorchester)
Bacarri Rambo	S	6-1	190	N/A	Donalsonville, Ga. (Seminole County)
Darrell Reynolds	CB	5-10	180	N/A	Brundidge (Pike County)
Jeremy Rice	RB	5-8	185	4.54	Madison (Madison Academy)
Gerell Robinson	WR	6-4	225	4.6	Chandler, Ariz. (Hamilton)
Steven Robinson	OG	6-3	307	5.0	Tallahassee, Fla. (Lincoln)
Chaz Rogers	QB	6-2	200	N/A	Guntersville
Justin Rogers	RB	5-11	180	4.5	Vestavia Hills
Quinn Sanford	OL	6-3	295	N/A	Batesville, Miss. (South Panola)
Jomarcus Savage	DT	6-2	260	N/A	Huntsville (Johnson)
	WR	5-10	190	4.4	
Burton Scott					Prichard (Vigor)
James Searcy	DE	6-2	220	4.65	Newnan, Ga. (Northgate)
Darrell Simmons	S	6-4	201	4.65	College Park, Ga. (Banneker)
Jamoris Slaughter	S-WR	6-1	170	N/A	Tucker, Ga.
*Brad Smelley	WR	6-3	215	N/A	Tuscaloosa (American Christian)
*Corey Smith	K	6-0	190	N/A	Bunker Hill, W. Va. (Musselman)
P.J. Smith	WR	6-1	170	4.6	River Ridge, La. (John Curtis)
Brian Sommer	S	6-1	170	N/A	Alcoa, Tenn.
Shawn Spence	WLB	6-1	200	4.69	Miami, Fla. (Northwestern)
David Spurlock	DL	6-5	290	N/A	Murfreesboro, Tenn. (Riverdale)
Trevor Stigers	DE	6-3	225	5.1	Ridgeland, Miss.
Daryl Stonum	WR	6-1	180	4.4	Sugar Land, Texas (Dulles)
Korey Suggs	LB	6-1	210	N/A	Russellville
Andrew Sweat	MLB	6-3	230	4.55	Washington, Pa. (Trinity)
Steven Sylvester	WLB	6-1	212	N/A	McDonough, Ga. (Union Grove)
Josh Tatum	OG	6-5	295	N/A	Marbury
Cooper Taylor	WR	6-3	164	4.49	Atlanta (Marist)
Dallas Thomas	OT	6-5	280	N/A	Baton Rouge, La. (Istrouma)
Demetrius Thomas	RB	6-1	200	N/A	Theodore
Jacoby Thomas	LB	N/A	N/A	N/A	Mobile (Murphy)
Brandon Thompson	DT	6-2	285	5.3	Thomasville, Ga.
Johnny Thompson	LB	6-1	205	4.6	Fairfax (Valley)
Chris Tolliver	WR	6-1	185	4.5	Rayville, La.
Lavertis Towns	LB	6-2	210	N/A	Dora
Barrett Trotter	QB	6-2	195	4.6	Birmingham (Briarwood Christian)
Justin Tuggle	QB	6-3	195	4.79	Duluth, Ga. (Northyiew)
Marcus Udell	CB	5-11	180	4.4	Tallahassee, Fla. (Copiah-Lincoln JC)
Omoregie Uzzi	OIG	6-3	291	5.0	Chamblee, Ga.
Demarkus Underwood	DT	6-5	295	N/A	Leighton (Colbert County)
Courtney Upshaw	DE	6-2	225	N/A	Eufaula
Deion Walker	WR	6-3	185	4.45	Christchurch, Va.
Lemanski Ware		6-2	205		
	LB			N/A	Lanett
Louis Watson	CB	5-10	165	4.47	Mobile (St. Paul's)
Richard Watson	RB	6-1	220	4.6	Tallahassee, Fla. (A&M Univeristy)
Keith Wells	DE	6-5	210	N/A	Gainesville, Ga.
Coley White	QB	6-1	170	N/A	Daphne
Marsellos Wilder	WR	6-2	190	N/A	Tuscaloosa (Central)
Rodriguez Wilks	WR	6-1	196	4.56	Smyrna, Tenn.
Branden Williams	S	5-10	185	4.55	Phenix City (Russell County)
DeMario Williams	WR	6-3	182	4.55	Columbia, Tenn. (Central)
Jeremy Williams	QB	6-0	200	N/A	Tuscaloosa (Central)
	DE	6-6	240	4.7	Reform (Pickens County)
*Michael Williams					
Tyler Wilson	QB	6-3	185	N/A	Greenwood, Ark.
		6-3 6-1 6-2	185 210 210	N/A N/A N/A	Greenwood, Ark. Ozark (Carroll) Lanett

^{*}Committed to Alabama

FOOTBALL BY ERIK STINNETT

BRYANT-DENNY STADIUM

Energized Fan Base Suggests Further Expansion

You know the shirts. The ones that talk about having the best time with "92,138 of my best friends at Bryant-Denny Stadium." Prior to last fall, the shirts had 83,818 as the number.

Want a little advice? You might want to hold off on buying any of those type shirts.

Even though an expansion of Bryant-Denny Stadium just took place, A-Day 2007 showed that even 92,138 seats isn't enough to hold the number of Crimson Tide fans wanting to watch their football team-one coming off a disappointing 6-7 season-scrimmage. No doubt, the Nick Saban factor was in full effect that afternoon. But the point is, with real games still to come and with the expectation and high probability that winning seasons and, yes, even championships, are on the horizon as well, Bryant-Denny Stadium is about to become the tiniest 92,138-seat stadium in America.

But no need to worry. According to a Birmingham News report last spring, Alabama Athletics Director Mal Moore has been thinking ahead. In an April 9 projects report, there are three long-term ideas listed for Bryant-Denny Stadium. One involves painting and waterproofing. Another involves an upgrading of its tunnel. The third? You guessed it. Another potential expansion-this time of the South end zone, perhaps to match the newly expanded North end zone. All three projects have apparently not even entered the proposal stage, so there are no details yet pertaining to funding source or target dates. It seems these are simply ideas. It's all part of the annual process every University department is required to go throughsubmitting to the Board of Trustees a fiveyear plan of potential projects that would cost more than \$750,000.

But who knows? Getting back to winning championships in the fall and continuing to turn out overflow crowds in the spring might just have a way of speeding up the ideas-to-reality process.

In the meantime, though, no one's shedding any tears over the stadium's current status. The latest expansion to the North end zone, along with the addition of the picturesque plaza on the north side, has again made Bryant-Denny Stadium the envy of the nation when it comes to college



Benjamin Coher

football venues. It may not be the largest—it's the eighth largest on-campus stadium in America—but it possesses an aura of wonder few stadiums possess (particularly at night).

Of course, Bryant-Denny Stadium didn't become the crown jewel it is today overnight. A week after it opened on September 28, 1929, Denny Stadium, which was named after longtime University of Alabama President George Denny, was officially christened as the University of Alabama's modern football facility. It seated 12,000. Within eight years of its christening, Denny Stadium had expanded to 18,000, and in the years to follow, the stadium's seating capacity steadily rose. Capacity reached 43,000 by 1961 and 60,000 by 1966. An upper deck on the west side was added in 1988 to bring capacity to 70,123. An east upper deck was completed in 1998, increasing capacity to 83,818.

On September 5, 1975, the Alabama Legislature enacted a resolution to change the name of the stadium to Bryant-Denny Stadium so as to also honor the school's legendary head coach, Paul "Bear" Bryant. The name change became official during rededication ceremonies on April 10, 1976 at the spring A-Day Game.

Yet if there's one thing that distinguishes Bryant-Denny Stadium even more so than its size and hyphenated name it is its unmatched tradition. The fact is, the stadium was and continues to be the home of one of the most storied college football programs in America. It's where people have come for decades not to see the Crimson Tide simply play football but see it win. And win it has, especially under Bryant when Alabama compiled a 72-2 record at the venue.

Legends have been born, championships secured and dynasties witnessed within the confines of this 78-year-old facility. It's the site where perhaps the greatest and certainly the most famous college football coach of all time walked the sideline. It's the only place you can go in America and hear thousands of voices unite as one to yell "Roll Tide!"

Simply put, Alabama football wouldn't be Alabama football without Bryant-Denny Stadium.

"You have to realize that stadiums all across the country are special to different people," former Alabama head coach Gene Stallings said. "Those from Tennessee feel their stadium is special. Personally, I feel it's the tradition that helps set Bryant-Denny Stadium apart. It's been the site of years and years and years of outstanding football when you think about Coach Wallace Wade to Coach Bryant. There have been hundreds of games played there and very few have not been sold out.

"The fact that there really aren't any professional teams in Alabama makes the games at Bryant-Denny Stadium that much more important. It's made it kind of a rallying point for the people of Alabama. Bryant-Denny Stadium is just a place of great tradition."

Coach Stallings was being modest in his "Wallace Wade to Coach Bryant" time frame. Stallings added greatly to the lore of Bryant-Denny Stadium in his seven seasons as the Crimson Tide's head coach. Nearly a constant stream of visitors passes by the larger-than-life statues of Wade, Bryant, Stallings, and Frank Thomas-Alabama's national championship football coaches-in the North Plaza.

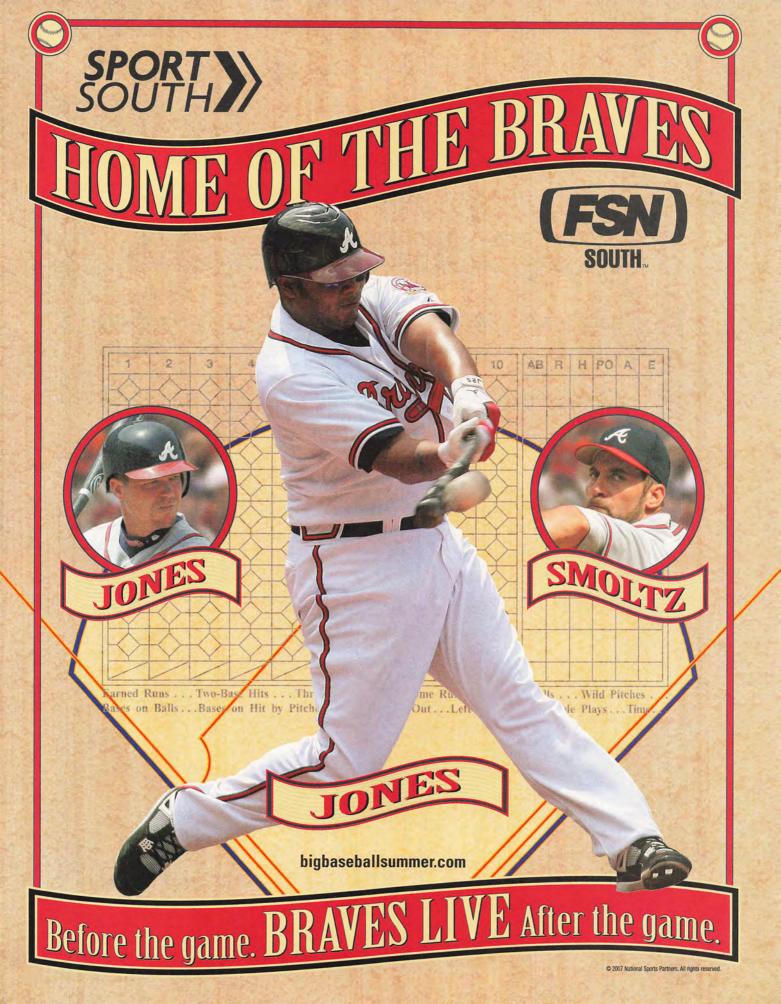
And, as history continues to show, it's a place that keeps getting better-and biggerwith age.

Bryant-Denny Stadium is the jewel among Alabama's athletics facilities. Football benefits from the extraordinary (and recently dedicated) Mal Moore Athletics Administration building, which houses football coaches' offices, the weight room, training room, practice locker room, equipment room, and meeting and recruiting facilities.

Bryant Hall, once the dormitory for Alabama football and men's basketball players, is now an expanded and remodeled building that houses an unmatched academic center for athletes in all sports.

Football players have four outdoor and one indoor practice field for preparation.

In short, Alabama football facilities are on par with Alabama football tradition and Alabama football expectations.



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Date	Event	Location	
1/24/2007	NHL All-Star Game	American Airlines Center (Dallas, TX)	
2/4/2007	Super Bowl XLI	Dolphins Stadium (Miami, FL)	
2/10/2007	Pro Bowl	Aloha Stadium (Honolulu, HI)	
2/16/2007–2/18/2007	NBA All-Star Weekend	Thomas & Mack Center (Las Vegas, NV)	
3/31/2007, 4/2/2007	Final Four Tournament	Georgia Dome (Atlanta, GA)	
4/2/2007–4/8/2007	Masters Tournament	Augusta National Golf Club (Augusta, GA)	
5/5/2007	Kentucky Derby	Churchill Downs (Louisville, KY)	
6/10/2007–6/20/2007	NBA Finals	ТВА	
6/11/2007–6/17/2007	US Open Golf	Oakmont Country Club (Oakmont, PA)	
7/8/2007–7/10/2007	MLB All-Star Weekend	AT&T Park (San Francisco, CA)	
8/6/2007–8/12/2007	PGA Championship	Southern Hills Country Club (Tulsa, OK)	
8/27/2007–9/9/2007	US Open Tennis	Arthur Ashe Stadium (Flushing, NY)	
10/23/2007–10/31/2007	World Series	TBA	

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